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The Week

THE two fascist trouble centers of Europe still kept the world trembling with resentment and apprehension. Italy, to stave off consideration by the League Council of the basic issues in the Ethiopian dispute, suggested that arbitration (interrupted by the departure of her delegates) be renewed to consider border incidents, but without power to discuss where the border is. Ethiopia declined this absurd condition, insisting that the League Council must decide the scope of the procedure. Anti-Jewish and anti-Catholic persecution in Germany was echoed in New York City by a mob that tore the Nazi flag off the "Bremen," and by Mayor LaGuardia, who refused a license to a German masseur, on the ground that Americans were ill treated in the Reich. It was echoed in Washington by a demand from Senator King that the United States investigate the persecution and, if warranted in doing so, break off diplomatic relations, and by an appeal from President Green of the A.F. of L. for an official boycott of German trade. Meanwhile the German government, ostensibly to curb Nazi rowdyism, took over the suppression of Jews. A special censorship was established over their artistic and intellectual work, more economic obstacles were placed in their way, and they were deprived of many amenities of life. At length, given pause by the reaction abroad, Nazi officials inspired dispatches to the effect that the whole campaign would be soft-pedaled. Jews can still get into the army. The German officials do not want to lose the propaganda opportunity of the Olympic games, forgo tourists' purchases or endanger the tender new friendship with the British.

THE long postponed meeting of the Communist International in Moscow resolved to reverse its former policy by coöperating with non-Communist sections of labor and liberals to save democratic governments from the threat of fascism. It called for non-Communist labor parties grouping all shades of opinion on the left, with programs of immediate objectives important to the workers. Two powerful influences apparently brought the Communists of the world to make this startling shift. One is the threat of war against the Soviet Union, embodied in the rise of Nazi Germany, a threat that Russia is trying to stave off by understandings with Germany's other, but capitalist, foes. The other influence is the bitter experience within Germany itself, where the opposition between Communists and Socialists opened a path for Hitler. In France the united-front tactics now officially endorsed have already been tried, so far with success. At the same time the speakers at the International emphasized that they had not given up their ultimate revolutionary aims, now postponed by necessity. And the American press, led by Hearst, tries to tremble at the assertion by Earl Browder that the American party now has 30,000 members, 40 percent of whom are native born, and was influential in the San Francisco general strike and the fight for unemployment insurance.

TWO other items complete the week's picture of a world moving toward war. The London Daily Herald revealed a huge British naval building program to follow the abandonment of the ratio system, and to be completed by 1942. It calls for the expenditure of £150,000,000, to produce twelve new capital ships, thirty-three cruisers, sixty-three destroyers, twenty-one submarines and three aircraft carriers. Germany will doubtless exercise

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her privilege of building up to 35 percent of this program and the other powers will join merrily in the armament race—if they can by any sacrifice afford it. The other news is more diffused, but equally ominous. The ravages of economic nationalism, practised by nations without resources adequate to sustain their populations, are being felt increasingly in the two fascist, aggressive countries, Italy and Germany. The situation of Italy is explained at some length in a separate editorial in this issue of The New Republic. In Germany, too, the cost of living is rising while wages stay down, the policy of substituting native products for imported ones is halting, government expenditures for armaments and other non-productive purposes are straining domestic finances, taxes are burdensome, necessary imports of raw materials are becoming more difficult to obtain because of the adverse balance of payments and the failure of credit. Economic crisis may moderate foreign policies, but on the other hand it may lead the dictators to use weapons for the creation of which their ruinous economic measures were adopted.

THE House has labored and brought forth a new tax bill along the lines recommended by the President. Although it raises the surtax rates on incomes from $50,000 up, it will produce, according to estimates, only $275,000,000 of revenue. The conservatives' revolt against the program is curiously illogical. On the one hand they are opposed to taxing the rich at all on the familiar ground that if the rich have plenty, all will be prosperous. On the other hand they object that this schedule does not yield enough revenue. House and Senate conferees are still deadlocked on the bill abolishing utility holding companies, the House members objecting to the presence of administration experts at the meetings. Revelations of utility lobbying continue. The banking bill is still in process, having been reshaped by Senator Glass to give the bankers more power over the centralized credit policy. Legislation safeguarding economic neutrality in the event of war is urged by the President and Congress progressives, though the latter are not in agreement with him as to how drastic it should be. Injunctions continue to shower down on the collection of A.A.A. processing taxes, the big packers and the tobacco manufacturers having joined the fight to disobey the law. To facilitate the collection of the many sales taxes throughout the country, the Treasury threatens to weigh down our pockets by the issuance of new coins—mills shaped like squares, and half-cents like doughnuts. We suggest that both should be made like the holes in Swiss cheese.

AFTER the anti-Nazi demonstration on board the "Bremen," during which the swastika flag at the ship's bow was torn from its staff and trampled underfoot, a silly cable to the crew arrived from Paul Joseph Goebbels, Propaganda Minister of the Reich, congratulating them on "their plucky conduct" in repelling the "brutal Communists." The crew's "plucky conduct" in reality consisted of running around the ship's decks in frantic circles while the demonstrators were ejected by the police. The police not only wielded their clubs but shot and seriously wounded an unemployed worker, Edward Drolette, in the groin. Mayor LaGuardia's refusal to license a German masseur, Paul Kless or Kress, is on shaky legal ground, as he himself doubtless knows. No matter what Germany does, the United States can relieve itself of its obligations under the 1925 treaty, which guarantees equality of treatment, only by formal denunciation. Nevertheless, there are times when a judiciously considered illegality on the part of a public official is not altogether bad. If Kress appeals to the federal courts, he presumably will be fully upheld in his rights, and meantime the Nazis, both in Germany and here, have had an excellent lesson in what racial discrimination means.

IN Terre Haute, the National Guardsmen sent in by the Democratic Governor to suppress the general strike used tear gas against the pickets, prevented the union men from meeting even in their own Labor Temple, and arrested a large number of strike sympathizers, including a university professor, whom they questioned not only about the strike itself but about their attitude towards war and economic questions. The strike was soon terminated on the recommendation of the local A.F. of L. leaders and the stamping-mill workers themselves, on whose behalf it had been called. Hopes were held out that the Department of Labor conciliators would bring results. As was to be expected, however, once the general strike was ended the company declined to concede anything or even to arbitrate, and strikebreakers were brought in under the protection of the police. (The mayor is a Republican, elected as a "friend of labor.") In Camden the strike of shipbuilders continued unbroken at the plant of the New York Shipbuilding Corporation. President Metten, testifying before a House committee in Washington, charged that it was being prolonged by Communists to interfere with naval building, this firm having a contract with the navy. At the same time it was evident that the company itself was prolonging the strike by refusing the request of the union for arbitration. While the Secretary of Labor urges arbitration, the Secretary of the Navy and its Commander in Chief do nothing to enforce the labor policy to which the government is ostensibly committed.

THE forced resignation of Dr. Amy N. Stannard from the Federal Parole Board last week cannot be excused on any grounds. Dr. Stannard's removal came about as an indirect result of the ending of the Virgin Islands controversy. Mr. Roosevelt accepted the resignations of both Governor Paul M.

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Pearson and his chief opponent, Judge T. Webber Wilson, and immediately found a place for Mr. Pearson in the P.W.A. Housing Division. In order to provide a job for Mr. Wilson, who is a protege of Senator Pat Harrison, Attorney General Cummings was instructed to oust Dr. Stannard. Administration spokesmen discreetly explained that so important a Democratic leader as Senator Harrison had to be placated. Dr. Stannard is a psychiatrist of high attainments; her appointment at the time of the Federal Parole Board's reorganization in 1930 was entirely non-partisan. The curse of the state parole systems in this country has been political favoritism, which has resulted in professional criminals with money being promptly paroled while friendless first offenders were kept in jail. The federal prisons ought to stand as models for the states, and in recent years they have, in fact, reached a relatively advanced level. In permitting the removal of Dr. Stannard for reasons of political patronage, Mr. Roosevelt has injured the federal prison system and the whole prison-reform movement.

ECONOMIC fallacies of the Townsend plan frequently have been exposed, but the revenue possibilities for organizers and leaders of the movement are just now coming to light. The plan has an enormous following in the West, particularly on the Pacific Coast. Dissension has broken out among the original supporters, and Frank Peterson, former national publicity director, is now leading an insurgent movement in Colorado. In newspaper articles and radio addresses, Peterson has accused Dr. Townsend and R. E. Clements, "co-founder" of the movement, of bad faith in working for adoption of the plan, of autocratic control and of personal ownership of the official publication, The Townsend Weekly, which Peterson says brings in a revenue of over $1,000 a week. Whether these charges be true or false, it is obvious that the Townsend movement carries a powerful appeal to old people who are threatened by insecurity. They are beguiled with all sorts of fancy memberships, such as the Townsend Legion of Honor for those who contribute one dollar a month toward advancement of the plan. The regular membership is supposed to pay ten cents a month toward organizational expenses. One of the lower estimates of total membership in Townsend clubs throughout the country is two million persons, and even if only one-half of them paid their dues, this would still bring an annual revenue of $1,200,000 to national headquarters. In Congress, the original Townsend plan has been withdrawn in favor of the McGroarty bill. Instead of providing an outright pension of $200 per month, this bill now makes a highly significant change in providing for a pension "not to exceed $200 per month." The two-percent transaction tax by which the measure is to be financed is hopelessly inadequate for any such maximum sum. If by any chance this bill should pass, we should still have no true old-age security plan, and the country, meanwhile, would be saddled with a national sales tax.

A BILL to eliminate compulsory military training in schools and colleges has been introduced by Senator Nye of North Dakota and Representative Kvale of Minnesota. The bill would amend Section 40 of the National Defense Act authorizing the establishment of Reserve Officers' Training Corps units by inserting the proviso that no unit shall be approved at any school or college "until such institution shall have satisfied the Secretary of War that enrolment in such unit (except in the case of essentially military schools) is elective and not compulsory." Of the 228 R.O.T.C. units now in existence, 73 are already voluntary, 37 are at primarily military schools and are therefore exempt under the terms of the proposed amendment, and 118 are at civil schools and colleges where military training is obligatory. The bill is aimed at this latter category, and would eliminate virtually all the controversy and disturbances that have arisen in the past few years over the subject of required drill. As Senator Nye points out, the bill would not affect the supply of student officers created for the United States Army, because the last two years of training, necessary to get an actual commission, are already voluntary at all institutions. Meanwhile, passage of this bill would be a tremendous step towards liberty of action for individual students.

Italy's Economic Crisis

A FEW days ago the government of Italy called the attention of the world to her desperate economic plight by removing the requirement that the gold-reserve ratio must not fall under the existing legal minimum. This was done for the purpose of releasing gold for payment of accounts abroad. Italy has nothing else with which to meet a net adverse balance of payments. Some months ago the government mobilized all the foreign holdings of private citizens, and these have now been spent. Italians have few if any investments abroad left, the sale of which could provide payment for imports. Neither the government nor private concerns can borrow any more; their credit is too poor. When the gold gives out, the lira must go, and Italy will at last find herself face to face with the reckoning she has postponed for many years. She cannot continue to buy more abroad than she sells. What a disaster this forebodes will be understood after a look at the facts (to which we shall return in a moment).

This situation has given rise to speculations as to whether Italy can afford to fight—even against a backward, virtually unarmed nation. Perhaps Mussolini has been bluffing, and an application of economic pressure by other nations may stop him. But the doubts, unfortunately, do not end there. There is also the question whether Il Duce can afford not

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to fight. Perhaps he has reached such an extremity that he must try a desperate gamble in the hope of avoiding an otherwise certain disaster of peace.

Early in 1927 The New Republic published an analysis of the Italian economic situation, in the light of which we predicted that the Fascist tendency was likely to lead to just such a disaster. Mussolini was laying his course, we showed, in a direction exactly the opposite of that required to maintain a stable place in the world for his country. The regime may come to be regarded, we wrote, "as the logical extreme of nationalist policy, and as the supreme example of its failure." We see every reason for reiterating this judgment today. Let us see what the facts were, and how they have changed since then.

Dr. C. E. McGuire's book on "Italy's International Economic Position," from which we took the data at that time, gave a clear and detailed picture. Though nearly a third of the Italian population over ten years old lived by tilling the soil, they did not raise enough food to feed themselves, being obliged to import wheat, flour, cornmeal, barley, sugar, beef and fish. Food exports were not sufficient to pay for these necessities. Manufactures could not be expected to enrich the people, because Italy was neither a center of trade routes, like England, nor the possessor of natural resources. She had no coal, iron or other important minerals. Her heavy industry was therefore particularly hampered by high costs. Ever since the foundation of United Italy, the nation had had an adverse trade balance. Unlike Britain, she could not pay for her excess imports by foreign investments, since her industries did not produce much of a surplus to invest. Nor was she able to contribute much to payment of her debts by the rendering of shipping, insurance, banking or other services.

Two major items of invisible imports alone were a considerable help toward keeping her going—remittances to relatives at home from Italian emigrants abroad, and the spendings of tourists. Even these, however, were usually not enough, and as a consequence there was a continual enlargement of the Italian foreign debt, both public and private, except for a few years after 1901. Service of the debt of course added to her difficulty, as the borrowings grew. To cap the climax, the Italian population was growing rapidly, while the outlets for its emigration were being cut off.

To meet this situation—which of course was not of his making—Mussolini adopted an extreme course of economic nationalism. He wanted to make Italy self-sufficient in the matter of food, and embarked on ambitious projects for wheat raising, at whatever cost. At the same time he imposed high protective tariffs on food imports. He also favored the industrial interests, so largely instrumental in his rise to dictatorship, by protective duties on their products. A program of hydro-electrification, though spectacular and in some degree useful, could not develop enough new power to eliminate the need for imported coal. He increased taxes to balance the internal budget, but simultaneously enlarged governmental expenses by a great military program. He went in for colonization and imperialism, evidently aping the success of Great Britain, achieved at a much earlier date when that island nation was the pioneer in industrialism and foreign trade. He did everything possible to encourage the growth of population. From the beginning he assumed the role of the aggressive militarist.

Judged by the standards of economic soundness and social welfare, this was a ruinous program. He could, as if by main force, produce more food, but only at a higher cost than the price of imported staples. The peasants could not be greatly benefited, while the industrial workers must either eat less or be paid higher wages, thus raising manufacturing costs in relation to foreign competitors. The protective tariffs on manufactured goods would not help to obtain foreign markets, though they would penalize the native people. The subsidizing of industry, even if successful, would not solve the problem of the adverse foreign balance, since the more goods Italian factories made, the more raw materials they would have to import. Heavy expenditures for public works and armaments, financed by equally heavy taxation, might supply profits for certain groups, but were an unjustified burden on the slender basis of Italian economy. Encouragement of population growth, if successful, would seem to make worse an already bad situation. Colonial imperialism was expensive, and without adequate result either in development of resources or in finding new opportunities for emigrants.

This policy was understandable solely on the ground of preparation for war. In that event the possession of an adequate domestic food supply, a high industrial development, a great and well equipped army, a large quantity of cannon fodder and a militant spirit might prove to be assets. But as Italy become more ready for war, the weakness of her economic position would unfold, showing its effects in a reduced standard of living for the Italians. If they were willing to pay a heavy enough price for military glory, Mussolini might get by when the crisis came. But it was out of the question that they would continue paying the price indefinitely without a taste of the glory.

Since the foregoing analysis was made, the internal Italian situation has, on the whole, grown worse. Italy no longer imports more food than she exports, to be sure, but the cost of living is high. Price controls intended to keep it down, when they work, mean that the markets are soon denuded of supplies and the articles in question are difficult to obtain at all. Altogether, Italy still has a considerable excess of imports, due to her demands for iron, coal, cotton and the like; her manufacturers are not able to reëxport enough of these after fabrication to maintain a balance. She has developed a considerable export of rayon, but this is not suffi-

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cient, particularly in view of the shrinkage of the market for silk. Both imports and exports have of course declined as a result of the depression. Meanwhile immigrants' remittances have shrunk, even more than it was foreseen that they would, while travelers are not spending nearly so much as they did during the boom. They are discouraged by the high prices, the effect of which is emphasized by the maintenance of the lira at a high exchange value. The employed population suffers, while, as the total population grows, the unemployed increase. The depression brought defaults of foreign obligations, as with so many other countries, and no more foreign borrowing is possible. Those who furnish Italy with iron, coal, cotton and other things will no longer sell except for cash; this cannot be provided without digging into the limited gold reserve. After that, the deluge.

In 1933, according to a recent estimate, Italy's commodity imports exceeded exports by about 1,500,000,000 lire. Emigrants' remittances (net) had shrunk to 500,000,000 lire, from 2,100,000,000 in 1929; tourists' expenditures (net) had been cut in half. In 1934 the adverse balance of commodity trade had increased to 2,437,000,000 lire, and so far in 1935 it has been nearly as large as for the corresponding months of 1934. Though figures on the chief credit items are lacking for these years, there probably has been little improvement.

Can Mussolini afford to fight? No, he is already, to all intents and purposes, bankrupt. He can use the supplies and munitions he already has, but he cannot buy the iron, coal and cotton to make many more. The expense of maintaining an army in action at a distant point will force the people to make still heavier sacrifices. If war draws peasants from the farms, it will mean that thousands formerly fed by their own efforts will have to be fed by costly purchases of food in the world markets.

Can Mussolini afford not to fight? Probably not. Like any bankrupt, he is faced with ruin in any case. His imports of iron, coal and cotton are needed not only for war, but for the peacetime employment and sustenance of the Italian people; there is no sign that if he abstains from fighting he will be able to borrow anything to finance these imports. His credit will be worse if he fights, but not good enough if he abstains. A political loan is the only possibility. Unless he obtains this by a kind of international blackmail, there appears to be no way of avoiding a crash. Then how can he continue to satisfy the people? What can he do with the unemployed? How can he divert attention from the sacrifices already entailed and now redoubled, as a result of his policy? Desperation may readily drive him to war. And the ominous pressure at home may be reinforced by dreams of glory abroad. For after all, this is the moment for which he has been preparing ever since he took power. Romanticist that he is, he may really believe that like Caesar he can replenish the treasury with the loot of empire.

Mussolini's Red-Ink Imperialism

MUSSOLINI has attempted to justify the conquest of Ethiopia by citing Italy's need for raw materials and markets, and for territory on which to settle her surplus population. He has told his people that England and France have grown great by imperialism, and that Italy, by seizing Ethiopia, can regain the grandeur of the Caesars. A survey of the known facts about Ethiopia shows no basis for this statement. There are resources there, to be sure, but the cost of their exploitation would be prohibitive. In promising economic gains from an Ethiopian colony, Mussolini is perpetrating a swindle upon his people.

By undertaking an Ethiopian campaign, Italy runs the risk of detonating a European war. Italy's losses from such a war, regardless of whether Italy was on the winning side, would far outweigh any possible profits from the richest and most accessible colony in the world, and Ethiopia is neither of these things. Even if no general war follows, the experience of the French with the Riffi in Morocco indicates that the final subjugation of the Ethiopian tribes will not be cheap.

But even if, by some magic, Italy were to receive a free gift of Ethiopia, fully pacified, it would still be a liability, instead of an asset. A quick notion of the primitiveness of Ethiopia's economy can be gained from the commodities in its foreign trade. Arranged according to their importance, imports for 1934 were: salt, gray cotton cloth, building materials, kerosene and gasoline, sugar, glassware, soap, automobiles, alcoholic beverages, rice, tobacco, arms and ammunition, dates and incense. The chief exports were: coffee, hides (notably leopard skins), goat and sheepskins, beeswax. The building materials among the imports were for the ornate government center that Haile Selassie is erecting at Addis Ababa, and the automobiles were for the Emperor and his court to use on Ethiopia's sixty-five miles of hard-surfaced roads, and 1,150 miles of dirt roads. Except for these two items, however, Ethiopian commerce is scarcely changed from the days of Balkis, Queen of Sheba.

An Italian settler going to Ethiopia to engage in farming would need to take with him complete supplies, including building materials for his home, agricultural tools and seeds. Ethiopia could not serve as an outlet for Italy's surplus population unless the government heavily subsidized each emigrant. Italy has not the resources to do this on a large scale. For about forty years, Italy has made sporadic attempts to colonize Eritrea, which, in the uplands beyond Asmara, resembles much of Ethiopia. The present European population of Eritrea is 4,565, most of whom are government officials. Recently, under Mussolini, attempts at colonization were finally abandoned because of the

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high costs. As it is, Italy's annual subsidy to Eritrea runs around 23,000,000 lire, and to Somaliland, around 42,000,000 lire.

There is another drawback to mass emigration to Ethiopia. Although extremely primitive, Ethiopia has an estimated native population of ten millions. Many natives develop into highly skillful workmen, as has been demonstrated on two Belgian coffee plantations and an experimental Franco-Belgian cotton plantation, already established there. As fast as means of transport are provided, presumably other plantations employing native workers would be set up. Throughout Africa, the individual white farmer, depending on his own labor, has never succeeded in competing with the native worker under white management and backed by European capital. An Italian peasant farmer in Ethiopia would either drop to the native standard of living or starve to death. The only opportunities for Italians in Ethiopia are as business men, managers and technicians.

In attempting to use Ethiopia as a source of raw materials, Italy will be confronted with its obdurate geography. The eastern third of the country, sloping towards the Indian Ocean, is semi-desert. With irrigation, parts of it might be made productive, but the cost of the necessary irrigation works probably would be prohibitive. Eastern Ethiopia resembles Italian Somaliland, which it borders, and in Somaliland Italy has found irrigation too expensive on a large scale. The western two-thirds of Ethiopia is cross-hatched by mountains formed of some of the oldest, hardest rock in the world. During thousands of years, rivers have worn valleys straight down through these mountains. The valleys are remarkably fertile, and almost completely inaccessible. The usual means of transport is the agile native mule. A caravan of a hundred mules, however, is required for the same load that, in this country, we pile on a ten-ton truck.

Italy for years has had a concession for a railroad from Massawa through Asmara to Addis Ababa, and so far has built 193 miles of it. The French-owned railway from Djbouti to Addis Ababa is a narrow-gauge line; trains run only during daylight, and require three days for the 486-mile journey. A schedule of two trains a week is maintained, with a weekly express, taking thirty-six hours, in the dry season. The warlike character of the Ethiopian tribesmen may be, as the Italians allege, in part the reason that railway development has been slow, but a far more compelling reason is the heavy expenditures that would be required. An Italian railway to Addis Ababa, to be profitable, would need to charge enormous freight rates, and Ethiopian cotton, rubber and bananas—the three products that most Italians talk about—would almost certainly cost more delivered at the seacoast than the world price for these products.

The only raw materials that might conceivably justify large immediate Italian investments in Ethiopia are minerals. For centuries, gold has been washed from Ethiopian streams, and consumed as ornaments by the local chieftains. Iron has similarly been produced for a very long time, and used for spear heads and daggers. Sulphur is mined, and a potash concession is now being worked by Europeans. Manganese is definitely known to exist, and there have been reports of coal, copper, lead and platinum. But despite this apparent profusion, the mineral wealth of Ethiopia is a matter of sheer speculation. However, for years adventurous white men have prospected in Ethiopia, and tried to interest European capital in their supposed discoveries. None of them has yet told a story convincing enough to obtain backing. Mussolini's promise to the Italian people of mineral wealth from Ethiopia is worth no more than a promise from an irresponsible mine promoter.

Ethiopia as a market for Italian manufactures may be briefly disposed of. Italian textiles, because of their cheap quality, until recently dominated the Ethiopian market, and, except for salt from Eritrea, constituted the largest item in Ethiopia's imports. Two years ago, to Mussolini's great anger, the Japanese displaced the Italians. The value of this trade, the loss of which has caused persistent Italian ill will towards Japan, in 1934 was 4,091,000 yen, or about $1,200,000. As a market, the whole of Ethiopia does not equal a single, good-sized Italian town.

One basic fact about Ethiopia has been carefully kept from the Italian people. That is that the chief river systems and valleys of Ethiopia run westward towards the Nile and British Sudan, instead of north towards Italian Eritrea. The natural economic bonds of western Ethiopia, the most fertile part of the kingdom, are thus with the Sudan, of which it forms the mountainous hinterland. Italians now cheering for Mussolini and war would do well to ask themselves what nation, ultimately, is likely to reap the profits of Ethiopia's development, and whether Mussolini is not offering them an extremely dubious prize that, if it becomes ripe enough to pick, is certain to fall into Great Britain's hands.

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Will We Stay Out of the Next War?

II: *Neutrality by Statute*

HINDSIGHT is always easier than foresight. Twenty years after the event the American people are beginning to understand how they became involved in the Great War. They are beginning to see a good many things they did not see at the time and they are drawing their own conclusions. They see, for example, that America was never really neutral at any time after August 1, 1914. They realize now that cargoes of cotton can be just as dangerous in time of war as cargoes of munitions, and that a profitable wartime trade may become as embarrassing as an entangling foreign alliance. They know that insistence upon "freedom of the seas" and "neutral rights" is more likely to draw us into another war than to keep us out. And they conclude, with understandable logic, that if war comes again this country must at all cost avoid making the same mistakes.

It is quite possible that within the next few years we shall be faced with the reality of another major conflict. The wave of anti-war sentiment that swept the country during the European crisis of last March showed clearly enough that the American people do not want to be mixed up in that conflict, if it comes. For the first time, perhaps, a considerable body of American opinion has begun to realize what Europe has sensed for several years—that the post-war era is over; that the world is again living in a pre-war era. This belated discovery that war is imminent has undoubtedly strengthened isolation sentiment. It has given unexpected point to such books as Walter Millis' "Road to War"; it has lent new emotional fervor to the curious campaign "to take the profit out of war" and it has heightened the current unpopularity of the munitions merchants. But above all, it has injected a compelling note of urgency into the discussion of American foreign policy and the issue of avoiding another war. Whatever we do, we must make up our minds without delay.

A few months ago there were hopeful indications that the Roosevelt administration was about to make up its mind on this paramount issue. Our State Department experts, it was revealed, had been making an exhaustive study of neutrality, with a view to revising our traditional neutrality policy. Their studies were shrouded in secrecy, but there seemed reason to believe that something tangible might emerge. Mr. Roosevelt, at one of his press conferences last December, went so far as to suggest that he might have something to say about this matter very soon. Before he left for his Florida fishing trip in March the President ordered Secretary Hull to complete his survey with all possible speed. Senator Nye, whose munitions committee had been pursuing the trail of American bankers through the maze of wartime financing, was led to believe that a program to keep us out of war might actually be pressed at this session of Congress.

But nothing happened. In April Mr. Roosevelt returned from Florida with a fresh coat of tan and promptly called for Secretary Hull to submit his completed report. Mr. Hull complied, though what his report contained and what the President proposed to do about it remained a mystery. Repeated queries merely brought the reply that the Department's survey had revealed appalling difficulties and enormous complications. About the only tangible thing that emerged was a report that the navy, with professional interest in freedom of the seas, had lodged strenuous objections with the State Department and the White House to any modification in our traditional doctrines of neutrality. When Senators Nye and Clark called at the White House a few days later they encountered a vague uncertainty on the whole subject and a positive antipathy to mandatory legislation.

Nothing further came from the administration in May and June as congressional sentiment began to crystallize and war clouds gathered over Ethiopia. But early in July there was another flurry. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported out two of the drastic measures sponsored by Senators Nye and Clark, of the munitions committee, and took steps to report a third resolution forbidding trade in arms. It looked as though Congress might act before the session was over. There was renewed activity at the State Department, and Secretary Hull appeared before the Foreign Relations Committee with the result that the two resolutions were promptly recalled, and a subcommittee appointed to confer with the Department on the matter. Yet even at this stage, with war increasingly likely in Europe, there was no clear word from the White House. The only indication of the position of the President was a press-conference statement that Mr. Roosevelt favored some kind of legislation, provided that the debate did not prolong the session unduly. What kind is still a question.

Congressional interest in neutrality came in the wake of the public apprehension aroused by the war scare in Europe. Writers on international law had been discussing revision of our neutrality policy for years without practical results. The State Department survey had been under way for many months before the first proposals for legislation were made in Congress. But beginning in March,

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when Hitler's rearmament program was announced to the world, a dozen bills and resolutions were submitted in the Senate and the House. Some were prepared in obvious haste and revealed a blissful ignorance of international law. Others showed signs of more careful preparation and indicated a serious attempt to face the major issues involved. Of these the Maverick and Kloeb resolutions in the House and the three joint resolutions introduced by Senators Nye and Clark in the Senate were conspicuous examples. The different bills embody a variety of novel departures, but they have this much in common: they all reflect concern over the prevailing policy of drift and they all call for immediate and drastic revision of existing law.

Three broad assumptions underly the proposed legislation:

1. That the United States can stay out of the next war if it really wants to;
2. That legislation can prevent us from becoming involved provided we formulate a new policy of neutrality now before war breaks out;
3. That the basic elements of such a policy can be found in our experience during the last war.

There is another assumption which is clearly implied in the proposed legislation: That is, that the economic causes of war overshadow the political and psychological factors. Senator Nye, in his Carnegie Hall address on May 27, built up an elaborate case to show that our entry into the World War was inevitable once we had allowed our industrialists and bankers to develop the huge war trade with the Allies. The famous telegram from Page in London, with its statement that "perhaps our going to war is the only way in which our present preeminent trade position can be maintained and a panic averted," is often cited as absolute proof. Walter Millis, in his penetrating analysis of the public mind of America between 1914 and 1917, shows that it was not quite so simple as that.

Each of these assumptions may be open to question. Charles Warren, who was one of the first to call attention to the need for preparing for neutrality, has confessed that he personally believes that the only sure way to avoid being drawn into war is to prevent war from breaking out. He and many others would prefer a policy of international coöperation and disarmament. But the Great Powers seem unwilling to follow such a policy and continue to pile up huge armaments; if we wait until the war comes before we decide what to do, we are likely to discover that it is too late. Whatever the limitations of laws on the statute books, few will deny that a consistent policy laid down in advance is preferable to one of continued drift and haphazard improvisation.

Improvisation, however splendid, did not save us from becoming involved last time, and it is not likely to serve us better next time. Mr. Bryan did his best, but he was unable to cope with the forces arrayed against him. When Senator Hitchcock introduced his arms-embargo resolution in 1914, the British Ambassador in Washington had no difficulty in demonstrating to Mr. Bryan that any change in our neutrality laws during the progress of a war "would affect the belligerents unequally" and therefore be an un-neutral act. We might try at the outset to forbid loans to the warring nations, but before the end of 1915 we would find them essential to the preservation of the new and lucrative trade in war materials. And by the time "national honor" and "prestige" had been invoked with the sinking of American ships on the high seas, we had passed beyond the borders of reason. Our continued effort to defend our so-called neutral rights simply led us into deeper controversy with both the Allies and the Central Powers, and in the end brought us to the point where we were forced to submit or fight. When Germany made her declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare we chose to fight.

The only real change in international law since 1917 is that today no one makes any pretense at recognizing neutral rights or freedom of the seas. Most authorities agree that the kind of interference with neutral trade practised by the British will be the basis of the rules for the next war. And as Mr. Warren says, "One must be a hardy optimist to expect that the United States as a neutral in any future war will be able to argue Great Britain, or any other major sea power, out of the views now held, or to expect any substantial modification of the policies pursued in the last war." As to our municipal law, armament firms are still free to ship their war materials to belligerents, exporters are free to trade in contraband if they choose, and bankers are free to advance their loans and credits if they think there is any chance to collect.

Senator Clark, co-author of the three Senate resolutions, put the issue squarely when he said, "Let us see this logic ahead of time, instead of later, when the only way we can be logical is to be illogical." He and his congressional colleagues are proceeding on the theory that there is still time to be logical. They believe we are wiser today than we were in 1914, and they assume that we are willing to pay the price if we understand the issue.

What, then, are the essential ingredients of this keep-out-of-war program? Most of the proposed legislation before Congress is mandatory—contrary to the desires of the State Department and the President, who would prefer discretionary powers—and calls for drastic restrictions on American commerce in time of war. The Nye-Clark resolutions (S. J. Res. 99,100,120) and the Maverick resolution (H. J. Res. 259) have four basic objectives in common:

1. An automatic embargo on the shipment of arms and ammunition to all belligerents in time of war.
2. A similar embargo on loans and credits.
3. Restriction of trade in contraband of war.
4. Limitation on travel by American citizens in war zones.

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The first provision would seek to check the flow of arms and ammunition from the United States on the outbreak of war. It would not leave the question of when to impose an embargo to the discretion of the President, but would make it automatic, and would forbid any traffic with the warring nations or with neutrals acting on behalf of belligerents. The Nye-Clark bill contains a full definition of arms and ammunition based on the draft treaty recently proposed by Secretary Hull at Geneva, and gives the President power to include "other war materials," such as fuel oil, nitrates and manganese, the shipment of which might prove equally embarrassing. Rigid enforcement of this embargo, it is argued, would remove one of the major sources of conflict in another war.

The prohibition of loans and credits, like that relating to munitions, is mandatory. It would close the American financial markets to any belligerent government or any private corporation in a warring country or any neutral acting for a belligerent. The measure would apply to any advance, whether a loan or a commercial credit, for the purchase of "any article declared to be contraband of war by any belligerent government." As the lists of contraband issued during the World War included almost every article of commerce, this prohibition would confine our wartime trade to luxuries or such other commodities as the belligerents could pay for in cash. If the belligerents want our goods, so runs the argument, let them take the risks and pay as they go.

The direct regulation of trade in contraband raises more serious difficulties. Belligerents and neutrals never reached any agreement on the definition of contraband during the War, and no agreement has been reached since. The pending resolutions accept the suggestion of Charles Warren that the easiest solution is to adopt the definition of the belligerents themselves. The Maverick bill would flatly forbid the export of every article on the contraband list of any belligerent, on the theory that the only sure way to keep out of trouble is to close our ports to warring nations. The Nye-Clark measure is less drastic. It would simply compel exporters to ship at their own risk or at the risk of the belligerent. The loss in trade resulting from either policy would certainly be heavy. Last year in the midst of depression our total exports to Europe came to $949,000,000—a sizable figure at any time. The only answer, and an easy one to give in peacetime, is that the loss involved in fighting another war to defend our rights will scarcely be less.

The fourth provision would apply the lesson of the "Lusitania," and seek to prevent the loss of American lives by forbidding foolhardy travel in war zones or on belligerent ships. The President would have full authority to withhold the issuance of passports whenever the life and safety of American citizens might be placed in jeopardy.

Other additions to our existing laws are proposed in the pending legislation. The Maverick bill, for example, would forbid armed vessels or armed aircraft of belligerent nations to navigate the waters or air space of the United States, and would prevent belligerents from chartering vessels of American registry. The Nye-Clark resolutions would permit the President to apply embargoes on munitions and loans *prior* to the outbreak of war "whenever he finds that conditions in any part of the world . . . may involve the United States in international complications, or contribute to armed conflict." But the four proposals outlined above constitute the real heart of the new neutrality program.

This legislation, its sponsors frankly admit, is not an absolute and infallible guarantee against involvement in war. It is not an automatic safeguard of our neutrality. It cannot protect us against the poisoning of people's minds that may follow in the wake of another war. But it does lessen some of the obvious dangers revealed by our last experience, and it does offer us a choice which, its advocates insist, is still open to the American people. The real question is whether we are intelligent enough to make our choice while there is still time.

There will be many objections to the new neutrality. Some of our vocal patriots, as Senator Clark has observed, are already protesting against this plot to haul down the American flag. Mr. Hearst has begun to harp on this theme and is quite capable of making the American people tremble at the thought of warlike foreign nations trampling on American rights and treating us with contempt. There are thousands of good Americans quite outside the ranks of the munitions makers who will deplore the "sacrifice of national honor" when they discover that staying out of war means giving up valuable markets and lucrative profits. When the time comes, will they meekly acquiesce in belligerent interference with our trade, or will they demand an adequate defense to protect their rights and the honor of the nation? Our State Department, moreover, may object that mandatory legislation will put diplomacy in a straitjacket and lay down rigid rules for situations that cannot be foreseen. Finally, the navy, with its vested interest in freedom of the seas, will not lightly surrender so useful an argument for bigger and better ships. Its recent protest, we may be sure, will not be the last to reach the White House.

A frank appraisal of the chances of keeping out of the next war compels us to admit other doubts. The power of government to interfere with private trade and commerce is inevitably limited by the very nature of our capitalist economy. Even in the early days of the republic, Jefferson found to his sorrow that he could not enforce an embargo on our trade with the warring nations of Europe. The storm of protest from Southern planters and New

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England merchants was overwhelming and effective. The embargo was withdrawn, and within a short time we went to war to defend our rights on the seas. Will we act differently tomorrow? Are we willing to suffer the heavy economic losses that will follow this self-denying ordinance? An arms embargo might perhaps be enforced in the event of another European war. It might also be possible to impose a ban on loans and credits. But it is an open question whether the attempt to suppress all foreign-trade contraband would keep us out of war or produce a reaction so violent as to force us into the conflict.

Still another doubt is raised by the provisions of the neutrality program. It is quite possible that if this policy had been enforced in 1914 it would have kept us out of the last war. Certainly the prohibition of the trade in arms and the war loans would have prevented points of friction and would have given Wilson an opportunity to preserve a semblance of neutrality. But will the same safeguards keep us out of the next war? The neutrality program assumes that the danger lies in Europe, and if the war is confined to Europe it may work. But the real danger of American involvement lies in the Far East rather than in the Old World. Our huge naval-building program is not being rushed to completion because of any threat from Europe. The fleet and its new air arm are concentrated in the Pacific and are being used primarily as an instrument of American diplomacy in Asia. Our Far Eastern policy has come into conflict with the policy of Japan, and the threat of war will not disappear until we remove the source of conflict. A neutrality policy based on our last experience in Europe may help, but in itself it is scarcely adequate.

In the end, however, none of these doubts can obscure the need for a definite peace policy formulated in advance and supported by a clear understanding of all the issues involved. The time for such a policy has come. If it is not carried through soon, it may be too late.

W. T. STONE.

This is the second article in the series, "Will We Stay Out of the Next War?" The third article, to be published next week, is by O. W. Riegel and deals with propaganda in the next war.—THE EDITORS.

Searching Out the Soviets

An Honest Reply to Honest Questions

During the recent press campaign against the Soviet Union some charges have been made more frequently than others, and with a greater show of authority. These charges are embodied in the following list of eleven questions, which The New Republic submitted to Anna Louise Strong during her recent visit to this country.

It is doubtful whether any such creature exists as a "neutral and dispassionate observer" of events in the U.S.S.R. There are hostile critics and there are sympathizers, and Miss Strong is a distinguished member of the second category. She has lived in Moscow since 1921; she has traveled to every part of the Soviet Union, recording her observations both for the American press and for The Moscow News, which she helped to found.—THE EDITORS.

THESE questions posed by The New Republic, as covering the chief attacks against the U.S.S.R., were submitted by me to ten friends, chiefly American reporters on The Moscow Daily News. While I take full personal responsibility for the final phrasing of the answers, they also represent the collective judgment of several trained American observers, living for several years in the U.S.S.R., who are sympathetic but not bound to the Soviet regime.

We all agree that no easier time could be found to answer anti-Soviet attacks. With spring sowing carried out at a speed and with a quality of tillage never before seen in this country; with a two-year grain surplus that has resulted in the doubling of pigs and calves in a single year; with iron production second only to America, and electric energy level with Great Britain, and farm-machinery production the highest in the world; with rural-trade turnover in the first quarter of the year 36 percent above a year ago; with transport at last moving ahead under Kaganovich, car loadings holding around 70,000 daily, which is 112 percent of plan; with sugar production in the first two months of the year up 35 percent and butter up 20 percent and milk up 18 percent over a year ago; with this economic strength reflecting itself in international relations making the U.S.S.R. a leader in the councils of Europe! . . . Really, with all this, and a million Muscovites joy-riding in our marble-decorated subway in its first three days of general traffic, it would seem easy to answer attacks on the U.S.S.R.

Yet the questions are serious—and difficult. They embody past centuries of capitalist tendencies in thinking, consolidated by the Soviets' cleverest foes. It is still more difficult to answer them briefly, without adequate explanation of the new bases of thought on which the Soviet world rests. . . . We have written and eliminated often. Here is the result of our labors:

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1. Is Russia ruled by one man, Stalin, much as Italy is ruled by Mussolini and Germany by Hitler?

No country is ruled by one man; this assumption is a favorite red herring to disguise the real rule. Power resides in ownership of the means of production—by private capitalists in Italy, Germany, America, by all productive workers jointly in the U.S.S.R. This is the real difference that today divides the world into two systems, in respect to the ultimate location of power. (Incidentally, why omit Roosevelt, whose personal dominance in mechanisms of government was as unconditional as anyone's during his first two years?)

Since liberals treat class rule as a figure of speech, let us note how it functions. The chief task of government in capitalist countries is regulation of relations between various private owners and the protection of their properties from encroachments by the working class. Recent history in Germany, Italy and America shows varying methods used to attain this goal. In the U.S.S.R. the chief task of government is the management and improvement of the jointly owned properties of the country and the building of a good life thereon for the joint owners.

Formation of government policies in the U.S.S.R. begins in local factory-production conferences and local village meetings in which all workers are urged to take part. Once or twice monthly the Communists of the given factory meet to correlate the results of such mass discussions and fit them into the general plans. These general plans themselves are determined by statewide and nationwide congresses arising from and correlating these local units. Party congresses draft the "general line" of policy; government congresses formulate its detailed application in government; trade-union congresses and farm congresses apply it in their own respective spheres. The delegates to all these congresses bring with them a wealth of local decisions and mandates.

No policy is ever announced by Stalin except as a result of this process. Major policies result from nationwide discussions of concrete conditions, continued over a period of months; these policies are known for years ahead and cannot be changed by any individual will. Minor shifts of policy are based on wide, swift sampling of thought in basic "political centers," *i.e.*, big factories. Even the famous "Dizziness from Success" statement by Stalin, which marked a reversal of method for thousands of local Communists, was not Stalin's statement alone. When millions of peasants cheered it, trying to make Stalin a personal hero, he swiftly disclaimed this, saying: "The Central Committee does not exist to permit personal initiative of anybody in matters of this kind."

Men in the U.S.S.R. never speak of Stalin's "powers," or Stalin's "will." They speak of his "authority" in the field of politics, of his "analysis," of his "method." His authority is the prestige of successfully applied knowledge; his method is the use of Marxian economic analysis to guide collective will. His speeches never deal in emotional oratory, as do those of personal dictator-demagogues. They consolidate with remarkable ability the thinking of hundreds of economists, scores of sections of the Academy of Science, millions of party members interpreting local conditions and demands.

"Authority with us," said a Soviet factory manager to me, "depends on how widely you can think. I can think with the workers of one factory for two years. Others can think for a whole trust for five years. We have comrades capable of managing government and others capable of directing trade unions. But Stalin thinks more widely than any. No one can analyze so matchlessly as he the place of the U.S.S.R. in the changing scheme of world revolution, and the place that must be given to each aspect of our daily task."

To analyze the mechanical and human forces that make history, and lead the working class of the U.S.S.R. in the use of those forces—such is Stalin's service to a working class that is doing daily, and increasingly, more serious, sustained economic thinking than any other working class in the world.

2. Under Stalin has world revolution been abandoned for the sake of Russian national policy?

Capitalists and Trotskyists like to think so, but neither Russian workers nor foreign Communists do. Even the Five Year Plan is discussed by Russians from the standpoint of its international significance; I have heard such discussions at four in the morning in an auto-truck fifty miles from the railroad by Young Pioneer girls engaged in a local sowing campaign.

Since it is Stalin's policy that is in question, we might quote Stalin himself on this subject: "The proletariat finds in the successes of the Five Year Plan fresh argument in favor of revolution against the bourgeoisie of the whole world. . . . *The successes of the Five Year Plan mobilize the revolutionary forces of all countries against capitalism.*" (Italics by Stalin, and almost the only ones in his fifty-nine-page report on the completion of the Plan.)

It is the revolutionary significance of Soviet successes that causes the wide campaign of lies today against the U.S.S.R., lest hungry, despairing workers the world over should know of those successes. The U.S.S.R., however, does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, whether by arms or propaganda. Only the workers of each country can overthrow their own bourgeoisie. Interference from outside enslaves the workers to their bourgeoisie in the name of patriotism. The success of one worker-ruled country is the strongest propaganda and incentive.

3. Has the average worker or peasant any voice in the government of his country?

Considerably more than he has in America. The elections last December convinced me of that.

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First, more people have the voting right, *i.e.*, all adults over eighteen except for a diminishing 2½ percent of "deprived." In America voting starts at twenty-one, and is not permitted to transient residents, migratory workers, soldiers and sailors or non-citizens, all of whom vote in the U.S.S.R.

Second, of possible voters 85 percent took part in the last election, a proportion unheard of in other countries.

Third, each voter gives more time and attention to voting, attending many preliminary meetings to discuss in small groups and in detail both candidates and instructions to the incoming government. These voters' meetings compile instructions to increase schoolhouses, to make more radios or sound films, to put artists in charge of design in textile factories, to adjust university hours to factory workers, to increase children's books of a certain type, to put township architects in charge of the new "farm cities," etc. All these were part of some 48,000 instructions issued by Moscow voters to their local government, which reported within three months on the fulfilment of hundreds of these and on the disposition it had made of them all.

Fourth, the voters choose some fellow worker whom they all know to carry out their instructions; student bodies choose students, Moscow Grand Opera sends a famous singer, auto workers choose a worker. They pick him for past efficiency in work, not for his speeches. Candidates never make speeches or election promises; this would be highly indelicate. The voters appoint and instruct them, and demand frequent reports from them. Voters themselves serve on taxing and housing commissions, etc., doing most of the miscellaneous work of government as volunteers correlated by their elected deputies.

With the growth of literacy and political consciousness and the approaching abolition of classes, a new election law now provides for secret, direct, equal balloting for all offices from the lowest to the highest. . . . See question one for further account of the participation of the masses in government.

4. Is the present standard of living extremely low? If this is true is it not proof that communism works less well than capitalism?

Since neither communism nor full socialism yet exists in the U.S.S.R., but only the preliminary stage known as "productive socialism," the question becomes: Does joint ownership of the means of production work less well for the common good than private ownership?

The answer is clear. Starting with a standard of living comparable to that of China or the Balkans, with millions of peasants living on a diet of black bread, supplemented at harvest time by meat or fat, and only very rarely a little sugar; suffering thereafter the ravages of war and intervention from which she did not recover even to pre-war standards till 1928—the U.S.S.R. created in five years thereafter and without the help of foreign loans a thoroughly modern industry and farming, and built on them a rapidly increasing standard of living. She has abolished unemployment. Millions of peasants who never possessed shoes, sheets, forks, toothbrushes are today buying bicycles, gramophones, radio sets, musical instruments. Soap, that touchstone of cleanliness and culture, increased from 170,000 tons annually in the whole of Tsarist Russia to 460,000 tons last year. Grammar schools increased in their attendance from ten millions to nineteen millions between 1928 and 1932—one prerequisite of this achievement being the production for the first time of adequate numbers of children's shoes. The struggle of the rural districts is no longer for bread but for sound films and "farm cities" designed by architects.

No one in the U.S.S.R. doubts that if Russia had remained capitalist, her economic backwardness would have doomed her to the fate of China, carved into spheres of exploitation by the world's imperialists. Instead of this, she is a modern industrial nation second only to America. Her industrial production in 1934 attained 239 percent of its 1929 level, and was four times what it was before the War. At the same time the capitalist world is going backward, dropping to 76 percent of its 1929 level of industrial production (America to 67 percent).

The Soviet standard of living goes steadily upward, while that of the rest of the world falls. Even during the Five Year Plan, when the country strained itself to produce chiefly the means of production, its output of consumers' goods increased 87 percent, and its rural-trade turnover 75 percent, from 1928 to 1932. The collective standard of living therefore improved rapidly even during this period, though many classes of workers felt a drop due to the draining away of consumers' goods to supply eleven million newly employed workers who had had literally nothing before. Today, on the basis of the achieved modern industry, goods are rapidly increasing and prices are rapidly dropping.

5. Is it true that during 1932-33 several million people were allowed to starve to death in the Ukraine and North Caucasus because they were politically hostile to the Soviets?

Not true. I visited several places in those regions during that period. There was a serious grain shortage in the 1932 harvest due chiefly to inefficiencies of the organizational period of the new large-scale mechanized farming among peasants unaccustomed to machines. To this was added sabotage by dispossessed kulaks, the leaving of the farms by eleven million workers who went to new industries, the cumulative effect of the world crisis in depressing the value of Soviet farm exports, and a drought in five basic grain regions in 1931. The harvest of 1932 was better than that of 1931 but was not all gathered; on account of overoptimistic

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promises from rural districts, Moscow discovered the actual situation only in December when a considerable amount of grain was under snow.

Opposing the tendency of many Communists to blame the peasants, Stalin said: "We Communists are to blame"—for not foreseeing and preventing the difficulties. Several organizational measures were at once put into action to meet the immediate emergency and prevent its recurrence. Firm pressure on defaulting farms to make good the contracts they had made to sell one-fourth their crop to the state in return for machines the state had given them (the means of production contributed by the state was more than all the peasants' previous means) was combined with appeals to loyal, efficient farms to increase their deliveries voluntarily. Saboteurs who destroyed grain or buried it in the earth were punished. The resultant grain reserves in state hands were rationed to bring the country through the shortage with a minimum loss of productive efficiency. The whole country went on a decreased diet, which affected most seriously those farms that had failed to harvest their grain. Even these, however, were given state food and seed loans for sowing.

Simultaneously, a nationwide campaign was launched to organize the farms efficiently; 20,000 of the country's best experts in all fields were sent as permanent organizers to the rural districts. The campaign was fully successful and resulted in a 1933 grain crop nearly ten million tons larger than was ever gathered from the same territory before.

6. Is there a chance of another famine this year, as Cardinal Innitzer asserts?

Everyone in the Soviet Union to whom I mention this question just laughs.

Reasons for the laughter are:

Two bumper crops in 1933 and 1934.

A billion bushels of grain in state hands, enough to feed the cities and non-grain farmers for two years.

A grain surplus in farmers' hands that has sufficed to increase calves 94 percent and pigs 118 percent in a single year.

The abolition of bread rationing because of surplus in grain.

The abolition of nearly half a billion rubles of peasant debts incurred for equipment during the organizing of collective farms—this as the result of an actual budget surplus in the government.

Tales of continued famine are Nazi propaganda on which to base a future invasion of the Ukraine.

7. Why were so many people executed after the Kirov assassination? Were any of them punished because they were political opponents of the present regime?

No persons were punished merely for political views.

One hundred and three persons were executed as members of murder gangs who crossed the Soviet border with revolvers and hand grenades to commit murder and other acts of violence against Communists and Soviet officials. Such gangs have existed ever since the revolution drove out the White Guard armies, but Berlin gave them shelter after Hitler came to power. They have for two years been bragging in newspapers published in Berlin and Jugoslavia of their successes in murder and destruction beyond the Soviet frontier. Today the whole world knows about Nazi terrorist tactics across frontiers.

These cases were handled by border guards until the assassination of Kirov aroused a storm of popular resolutions calling for drastic action against terrorists. A court-martial composed of well known members of the Supreme Court thereupon made a rapid clean-up of all these cases in several cities, publishing the fact that the terrorists had been armed when arrested, had run the border from Poland and Rumania and had plotted and carried out murders. The trials were *in camera,* since open discussion of details was tantamount to accusing several governments of acts that rank as causes of war.

In the Kirov case itself fourteen persons were executed, former members of the "Zinoviev opposition," who confessed that they had in recent years formed a "Leningrad Center" to assassinate Soviet leaders. They connected abroad through the Latvian consul-general, who on evidence shown was recalled by his government. . . . Zinoviev and Kamenev themselves, with a small group of Moscow followers, were imprisoned on their own confession to organizational connection with the Leningrad Center and knowledge of its terrorist views. There was some popular demand for their execution, but it failed, as nothing indicated direct participation in or knowledge of the actual murder.

8. During 1928-32 were many scientists and technicians falsely charged with sabotage and arrested or imprisoned merely as scapegoats for inevitable shortcomings of the Five Year Plan.

Every American specialist who worked in Soviet industry during those years knows that there was much sabotage. Ball, in the Stalingrad Tractor Plant, told me: "At first there were two gangs in this plant; one was making tractors, the other was preventing them. I've seen sabotage in the States when firms were at war. Think I didn't know it here? The plant was lousy with it, but oh, boy, they took them out of here!"

Other Americans told me of an agronomical expert who organized the ploughing of a 200,000-acre farm to increase erosion, of a factory manager who sent false reports on American machines being bribed by a rival German firm. I myself heard a dozen Russian employees of the British firm Metro-Vickers tell in open court of the destruction they did in power plants.

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Men high in the canning industry put broken glass, animal hair and fish tails into food destined for industrial workers. A township veterinary who hated collectivization inoculated 6,000 horses with plague. An irrigation engineer tried to discourage the policy of settling nomad races on the land by using thirty-year-old surveys that he knew were incorrect and that would not deliver the water. All of these and thousands more confessed.

What were the causes? Resentment of the highly aristocratic Russian engineer against workers' rule; resentment of new technique that made their knowledge out of date; actual bribes by foreign firms; anger at the final drive against capitalism embodied in the Five Year Plan. This led in 1928-30 to what Stalin called "an epidemic of sabotage" among the higher engineering staff.

Scapegoats for failure were not needed, for the Five Year Plan did not fail. The energy and sacrifice of loyal workers and technicians carried it through. Its success won over many earlier saboteurs, so that by 1931 Stalin was able to report that "these intellectuals are turning towards the Soviet government," and should be met "by a policy of conciliation." Thereafter sabotage cases rapidly diminished both in number and seriousness.

9. Is the O.G.P.U. under another name employing two or three million political prisoners in carrying out a program of forced labor?

The picture that these words arouse for the average American—of idealistic intellectuals condemned to heavy, unpaid, chain-gang work—does not exist in the U.S.S.R.

There are, however, "labor camps" in many parts of the country, as part of the Soviet method of reclaiming anti-social elements by useful, collective work. They replace prisons, which have been steadily closing; I have found old prison buildings remodeled as schools. Men in the labor camps draw wages, have vacations in which they leave the camp, and rise in their profession like free workers. They work at their specialty; engineers do large-scale engineering, intellectuals do cultural work, teaching and clerical work, actors put on plays, unskilled workers are trained in trades and illiterate men get schooling. Their wives and families are often allowed to visit them for extended periods.

These camps usually work on some nationally famous project which is intended to stir instincts of creative energy and collective pride. Men who respond to these motives may rise to the highest honors. The Baltic-White Sea Canal, for instance, was celebrated not only as an achievement in construction, but as a place where criminals "made themselves over." Many former thieves, saboteurs, murderers, received the Order of Lenin, the highest honor in the country.

Statistics of the number and type of men in these camps are unavailable. The highest estimate I ever heard by a competent judge gave a total of several hundred thousand men. This was three years ago, when kulak prisoners working alongside free men in Kuznetsk, Magnitogorsk and other construction jobs formed the largest part of the total. Since kulaks have since been granted amnesty, the number today can be only a fraction of that.

Moreover, the "labor camp" system is also temporary, and applicable to the period when anti-social elements threaten to disorganize the new socialist society in its formative stages. The former aristocrats recently exiled from Leningrad were not sent to camps, but to ordinary Soviet cities, some of them to higher-paid jobs than they had in the metropolis. For the type of prisoner meant in America by the word "political," a transfer to a job in a different city is often considered sufficient to break up old associations. It must be remembered that "political" in a socialist society includes also saboteurs, destroyers of public property and terrorist murderers.

10. Is there a new privileged class of bureaucrats that is taking the place of the class of capitalists and landlords?

Inequality of income is increasing but not "privilege." The characteristic "privilege" of the capitalists is their ownership of the means of production which enables them to exploit others.

Equality in income is not a Marxist principle. Marxist "equality" is the equal emancipation of all from exploitation, the equal joint ownership of the productive means, the equal duty of all to work according to ability, and the equal right to receive according to one's work during the period of socialism, and according to one's "requirements" during the future period of communism. Capitalism rewards men not in accordance with either their labor or their requirements, but in accordance with their ownership; *i.e.,* in accordance with privilege. Such privilege does not exist in the U.S.S.R.

Inequalities sometimes increase and sometimes diminish in the U.S.S.R. Some years ago, when standards of lower paid workers were very low, the policy was to increase these first towards "equality." This policy reached its obvious limits when workers began to refuse to become managers or to increase their skill, since rewards did not increase with responsibility.

Today, when the production of skilled staffs is the greatest need, the policy is to obtain this by differentiation in rewards. The highest payments, however, go not to "bureaucrats," *i.e.,* officials, but to writers, actors, scientists, engineers and skilled workers, all of whom are paid on piecework. This policy also will reach its limits; it produces abuses in the tendency of some people to "splurge." Such people are not generally admired but are criticized as "bourgeois" or as having the "peasant mentality."

Marxists rely on the joint ownership of the means of production to prevent inequalities from consolidating into "privileges." They rely on the

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rule of workers to correct abuses before these go too far. There are signs already of a counter tendency in the arrest of several officials for unduly lavish expense accounts and waste of state funds.

11. Has censorship sapped the vitality of Russian art?

This is another of the questions at which everyone who hears it laughs. We all know that Moscow is the mecca for artists of all kinds, and that it is especially in those fields where censors exist—theatre, movies and the novel—that Russian art attracts the attention of the world.

If art survived censoring by the whims of princelings in the feudal ages, and censoring by the profit motives of publishers, the illiterate Comstockians and the Catholic Church in America today, why should it not survive censoring by highly educated officials of the Commissariat of Education, who judge from the standpoint of its usefulness for a socialist culture?

To the author in the U.S.S.R. the "censor" is not unlike the publisher's reader in America—a person who attempts to forecast the judgment of one's future public. If the author disagrees, he hunts another reader; in the U.S.S.R. he can hunt another censor. Important plays are increasingly censored by previews attended by leading critics, and even by workers and children—the future audience. Sometimes as many as fifty persons make comments during these previews, which often last for six or seven hours. Only an artist who produces for his own solitary enjoyment finds in such collective comment a bar to creative work.

As the forms of the socialist society become more established, the tension between artists and censors tends to lessen, since both are increasingly attuned to the same social environment. What is this social environment in the U.S.S.R.? It is an increasingly cultured population, whose masses increasingly take part in the creation of art. Millions of rural journalists, thousands of rural dramatic clubs, tens of thousands of rural and factory orchestras furnish a basis of mass self-expression from which a veritable Renaissance can grow. This is recognized by most critics who have visited the U.S.S.R. in recent years.

ANNA LOUISE STRONG.

The War of the Unemployed

ALREADY the next war is beginning to show its true face. Both in its preliminary tremors—the episodes of Manchuria and Ethiopia—and in the open preparations of such countries as Japan, Italy, Germany, Poland and Hungary, the major strategy is now apparent. This is to be a war of the unemployed, carried on in the sacred cause of finding labor markets for national work.

In Italy, in a single week, a call was sent out for 70,000 men to volunteer for service in Ethiopia. The Fascist Black Shirts were mobilized in their barracks. They were drawn up in ranks, and the commanding officer prepared to select those who were to go and those who were to stay. The officer ordered, "Those who are unemployed, move one step forward." The command was executed. Then spoke the officer, "In the name of the government, I rejoice with you. You will have the honor of leaving for Africa in order to make room for Italian work."

I have heard a great many stories of similar episodes. Engineers without clients, doctors without patients, lawyers without litigants, teachers without schools—these are the ones who are urged to go to Ethiopia. In general, any application to volunteer is given consideration, but only the requests of the unemployed are accepted at once.

The point is stressed in the government meetings that are held all over the country to explain to the masses the origin and aims of the expedition against Ethiopia. The official propagandists point out that the countries which used to admit Italian laborers in great numbers, North and South America, France, Switzerland and North Africa, now have closed their doors to immigration. "Shall Italian workingmen resign themselves to such conditions?" cry the orators. "Shall we accept, without resistance, this condemnation to hunger and famine?" The answer comes back from the unemployed, "No!"

This line of reasoning is by no means confined to Italy. Exactly the same thing is taking place in a great number of other countries. Japan's Tanaka project for the colonizing of the whole of Asia, from Siberia to India, has been popularized with the masses as a plan for creating a market for Japanese work. The labor unions of Japan, including many unemployed, took upon themselves the ideological preparation of the masses for the invasion of Manchuria "as a first step to make room for Japanese work."

Consider what is taking place in Germany. Let us look at Hitler's little essay in self-glorification, "My Battle," of which 1,800,000 copies have been sold in the Reich, according to government figures. In this autobiography, Der Führer-turned-economist points to the encirclement of Germany, "proves" that it caused the country's economic crisis and unemployment, and recommends expansion at the expense of France, Russia and Czechoslovakia.

The items increase. Der Völkische Beobachter prints a series of three articles calling upon Poland

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to join Germany in crushing the Little Entente, the U.S.S.R. and the Baltic countries. Herr Reibniz issues a pamphlet in Germany explaining that the aim of a German-Polish entente would be an attack on the U.S.S.R. to separate the Ukraine from the Soviet Union and remedy the economic difficulties of Poland. From Poland itself comes a book by Wladyslaw Studnicki, "The Political System of Europe and Poland," which reveals the new orientation of certain Polish political thought with an arrogance and a lack of reticence that would have seemed unbelievable even twelve months ago.

All this war literature, inspired by the most different and contrary nationalistic interests, has, nevertheless, one thing in common: the appeal to the unemployed. Thus does military nationalism assume its most perfidious mask—standing forth in the guise of a kind of labor imperialism. Although the ostensible beneficiaries are the workers, it is highly significant that this fierce expansion beyond existing frontiers should be advocated by the same parties, the same ideologies and the same politicians that are inveterate partisans of autocracy. This repeated contradiction suffices to throw a clear light upon the "labor" spirit of these warriors.

What they are really striving for, of course, is an autarchy—with themselves in control. But from the capitalist point of view, one's own autarchy is hard to reconcile with one's neighbor's autarchy. At bottom each Great Power endeavors to put itself on an autarchical national basis by extending a privileged situation over an economically backward country. Pure autarchy is neither practised nor practicable by any country, except perhaps the U.S.S.R., which is a continent.

It is necessary to be very clear about the present crucial period in world economy in order to understand the danger of war that now threatens. A century ago, world economy was organized around a single industrial center, England. By the end of the World War, this situation was broken up into four industrial centers—America, England, Japan and Germany—each of which would have been capable by itself of supplying the demands of the world. Commercial antagonism among these four world powers dominated the first post-war period. Dangerous frictions developed, but the field of action was still vast enough to prevent an actual clash. The second post-war period was dominated by the efforts of other countries and regions, such as France, Russia, Italy, South America and the dominions, to avoid becoming the victims of these big antagonisms.

The method chosen was autarchy. Each national industry erected a barrier around the home market and labeled it, "Private Hunting Field." The small countries imitated the big ones. The autarchical policy gave all that it could give—that is to say, very little. At one stage the notion spread all over the world that agricultural relief might enlarge the home market. In Italy this led to the "battle of wheat," the "battle of rice" and the "battle of straw"; in England to Mr. Elliot's policy; in Germany, Darré's laws; in France, measures favoring wheat and inland wines directed against the products of North Africa; in America Mr. Hoover's price-pegging and Mr. Roosevelt's A.A.A.; and in the U.S.S.R. the abolition of bread cards. Everywhere resounded the utopian and poetical watchword, "Back to the land!"

This policy has given what it could give, that is to say, very little. It played the role of the oxygen given to the dying, which prolongs the agony but does not bring back health. The countries that were quickest to adopt those experiments were the fascist countries. These countries are now the protagonists in inaugurating the third post-war period —the period of the new war. Provisionally and as a means of defense they maintain and even strengthen their autarchy, but at the same time they take the offensive and attack the nearest and weakest competitor.

In this frame the Ethiopian expedition must be placed. The expedition has an obviously capitalistic and imperialistic nature. It represents purely and plainly an act of brigandage. That this expedition wears the mask of being a war for the unemployed is in keeping with the political technique of fascism, but does not change its real motives. This new, this "labor" imperialism, is almost certain to be used in democratic countries, too. "The right to work," formerly a Socialist slogan, will be shouted by the unchained nationalistic hordes.

Thus the next war will be the war of the unemployed, in the same way that the last war was the war of democracy. The next war will wear the mask of work, just as the last war wore the mask of civilization. Both of them arisen from the capitalistic system, both of them caused by the capitalistic system, history will distinguish one from the other by the different masks they assumed.

The unemployed will be the fatherland's beloved. We shall see a new type of hero: the Hero-Unemployed. In the last war every poilu in the French army had his *marraine*, his godmother, who took him for her individual concern, sending him gifts of sweaters and sweets. Instead of godmothers for the tommies, the doughboys, the poilus, in the future we shall have the godmothers of the unemployed. "Mine," the marchioness will say, "is a metallurgist who has not worked for five years." "Mine," the baroness will answer her, "is an electrician who has been out of work for ten years"—causing the marchioness to bite her nails in envy. Instead of the Unknown Soldier, we shall have the Unknown Unemployed. He, too, will have his triumphal arch, and under the arch an ever living flame will burn. It will be touching indeed if the petroleum companies get the idea of offering the oil for the permanent lamp at a reduced price.

I suggest a splendid motto to spread over the dead of the next war as they lie sleeping in the cemeteries: "Unemployed back to the land."

IGNAZIO SILONE.

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Washington Notes

The Complex Mr. Roosevelt—A Happy Warrior But a Bad General—The Tobacco Industry's Voluntary Code

MR. ROOSEVELT just now is not popular with Congress. The official administration leaders do not like his tax program. They are sorry he brought up the subject. On the other hand, the left-wingers are alarmed by what they consider the flabbiness of his proposals, and want to go much farther. There is a similar double feeling of irritation about the banking bill. Half of Congress believes that it endangers the foundations of the state; the other half considers it as inadequate as a Popsicle in the Eritrean desert.

There is an important difference, however, between the attitude towards Mr. Roosevelt taken by the right and that taken by the left. Conservatives like Senators Byrd, Glass, Hastings and Tydings do not approve of him, and never expect to. But, on the left, men like Senators Costigan, La Follette and Wagner feel that Mr. Roosevelt in his heart sympathizes with them and is on their side. When he abandons them, as he repeatedly does, they are perplexed and often angry, but they remain attached to him.

This is no new situation. It springs, I think, from the circumstance that, while Mr. Roosevelt has no well organized political philosophy, he possesses a deep, wholly personal distrust of men of great economic power, the Wall Street bankers and great industrialists. Even when Mr. Roosevelt was ostensibly coöperating with big business during the truce arranged last fall by Mr. Raymond Moley, his hostility revealed itself in many little ways. From its beginning, the truce was marked by the most cordial ill will on both sides, until it finally exploded in a blaze of insults and counter-insults at the annual meeting here in May of the United States Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Roosevelt has been widely accused of insincerity in his espousal of left-wing measures. In my judgment, this accusation is unjust. After watching Mr. Roosevelt during his two years as President, I have come to think that the truth is more complex. His unsatisfactoriness as a leader of the left does not arise from insincerity, but from the fact that his emotion of indignation against big business is simply an emotion, and has never developed into a conscious body of beliefs about the permanent changes necessary to bring about the end of business rule.

There are many episodes in Mr. Roosevelt's career as President that, in my opinion, can be explained in no other way. The most sensational of these was his forcing the steel industry to accept an N.R.A. code. Mr. Roosevelt fought with the coolness, steadfastness and savagery of a great leader. Supposedly vast issues were at stake. If the steel industry accepted a code, it was understood that government and consumer representatives would gain the right to review its trade practices, and compel greater production and lower prices. It was understood that the industry would be obliged to agree to independent unionization. Mr. Roosevelt made a ferocious assault on the chief citadel of industrial Bourbonism, declined all offers of compromise and won a dazzling victory, the fruits of which he instantly tossed away. His joy seems invariably to lie in the fight itself. He appears oblivious to the fact that once control is wrested from big business, new forms of control must be devised. His nominal position is that he wants to restore the economic life of the country to all the people, but whether "all the people" means medium-sized and small business men and farmers, or means industrial workers and farm laborers, remains undefined.

This episode of the steel code—and a number of others like it could be cited—gives a complete explanation of Mr. Roosevelt's attitude in the present tax controversy. He is immensely indignant that forty-six individuals should possess incomes of more than a million a year without being taxed at a special increased rate. He will fight to impose this special rate with all the wiliness and force he has in him. This trait of always being willing to oppose the most powerful elements of the community is what endears him to the left-wingers in Congress. But it does not make him a good leader of their forces. The left-wingers are fighting to bring about, through the indirect means of taxation, the transfer of control of a certain part of the national income. Instead of its being at the disposal of the owning class, they want to place it at the disposal of the workers, in the form of security against unemployment, sickness and old age. To accomplish this involves more than punishing the handful of persons receiving more than a million a year; it means a drastic increase in all income surtaxes. But, as he has repeatedly shown during the present session, Mr. Roosevelt will not interest himself in the working out of this fundamental and complex program. It has his benevolent interest, but he won't fight until he sees the whites of the eyes of easily identifiable opponents.

These same characteristics of Mr. Roosevelt account, in part, for the vicissitudes through which the Guffey coal bill has passed. There are no longer any arrogant coal-mine owners; the potential opposition to the bill lies among the strict constructionists of the Supreme Court. Accordingly, in almost so many words, Mr. Roosevelt originally urged the passage of the bill as a challenge to the nine old men. He made it seem, in a sense, like the administration's reply to their ruling in the Schechter case. The uproar that followed apparently convinced Mr. Roosevelt that for the present he cannot afford to attack the Supreme Court, and the Guffey bill was hastily laid aside. John L. Lewis, the miners' leader, last week gave the administration until September 16 to decide upon the course it wishes to follow. So far as Mr. Roosevelt is concerned, however, the significant thing about the incident has been his calm willingness to meet the Supreme Court head-on. Whether he will some time engage in open combat with the Court depends upon future events, and in particular upon whether the Court next winter holds the A.A.A. processing taxes unconstitutional. During his 1932 campaign, Mr. Roosevelt decried the "Republican majority" of the Court, and his remarks after the Schechter decision left no doubt that he regards it as an outpost of privilege, and therefore attackable.

A precedent of potentially great importance is being set in the "voluntary" code that the wholesale tobacco

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industry has submitted to the Federal Trade Commission. It contains a provision against loss-leaders, and fixes the resale price of nationally advertised articles. It is conceivable that under planned supervision these would be useful provisions. But they raise a question of wide ramifications, and one certainly not to be decided in semi-secrecy.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

God Loves Big Battalions But Not Big Debts—What of Mussolini's Finances?—Roman Racketeers Were Wiser

GOD, OF course, is on the side of the big battalions. But God is also something of an economist, and sometimes, doubtless, God must become horribly confused in making his choice between big battalions and big debts. Now Italy has the big battalions. But she also has a large and growing national debt upon which she must pile whatever debt she incurs in her holy war to reassert her ancient Roman heroism by shooting up the legitimate descendants of Solomon and Sheba.

The first machine gun has not yet cut down the first Ethiopian patrol; the first story of African savage cruelty has not yet crashed the American newspapers, yet already the first rumblings of that great Italian debt have been heard. The modern Caesar has been shopping around in this country and, I dare say, in England and France, for a little financing. After all, you must have kale as well as nitro-glycerine to run a modern war. And one wonders where Mussolini is to get the money. He has been running his home business on borrowed funds for some years. The fascist planned economy, for some reason, has not been working. As in America's unplanned capitalist society, the dictator has had to borrow huge sums of money and feed them into the economic bloodstream to keep it flowing. He has borrowed in the neighborhood of from four to five billion lire a year. His national debt—or rather his internal national debt—was 91,000,000,000 lire in 1931. It is 105,000,000,000 now. It will be, in spite of the hopes of the finance minister, close to 110,000,000,000 in 1936. And this leaves out all the cost of the approaching war. Caesar cannot borrow from the Italians much longer. The balance of trade has been hopelessly against him for years. His gold stocks are threatened. He now turns to other nations.

In America, of course, he is stopped before he starts. The Johnson Act bars loans to defaulting debtors. Italy owes us something like two billion dollars for her last war. But the Italian financier thinks he knows more than one way to enable a government to borrow. What is to prevent a number of Italian corporations from negotiating large American loans and then in turn lending that money to the government? This is the means contemplated for raising money in America, enabling the modern Roman to continue the ancient pastime of slaughtering African tribesmen.

If there is any American citizen who wants voluntarily and directly to lend his own funds to Italy I suppose there is no way to stop him. But why, we may ask, should investment bankers or commercial bankers lend funds entrusted to them to Mussolini directly or indirectly for such a mad adventure and upon such slender chances of recovery? It is proposed to get around the risk by making such loans only on the security of American bonds or shares now held by Italians and offered as collateral for the loans. But there still remains the general, barbarous objective of the loan. The State Department or the Commerce Department or a Senate committee at least can enforce strict publicity on any loans made to Italy.

Aside from all this, there can be little doubt that the dictator faces a serious difficulty. The laws of money, of income, of banking, work against him. He has borrowed so much that his credit is now facing impairment. Already the lire seems to be in trouble in the exchange markets. Certain kinds of lire have been sold at large discounts in New York. Does Italy face, not merely the heat of Africa, and the wrath of Selassie, but the printing press as well?

And what if she gets through the war? What if the victorious dictator comes back to Rome with the king of kings lashed to his chariot wheels? When the shouting dies, will not the debt and the economic impasse he now seeks to escape still be there to plague him? Indeed, will not that debt be there plus the debt incurred to conquer Ethiopia? How will Mussolini meet that crisis? And what will happen to the sums advanced by Americans then?

Mussolini may give an excellent moving-picture imitation of an old Roman adventurer. But ancient Roman conquerors made war on no such tribes as Haile Selassie's people. Those ancient gangsters were, above all, realists. War with them was a racket. They went to war for one purpose, as a rule. When Rome needed money or slaves, the consul or the emperor looked about southern Europe or eastern Asia or northern Africa for some nation with plenty of booty and ample revenues. Then he sent forth his legions to subdue the victims and seize as much loot as possible. The soldiers were followed by the collectors of revenue, who proceeded over the years to squeeze taxes out of the conquered people and send them to Rome.

This was intelligent conquest. It kept Rome off the rocks for centuries. But the modern Caesar will come home with no thousands of slaves in his train. There will be no division of loot among the generals and the privates. Soldiers' bonuses there will be, of course, but they will be wrung from the hides of the already crushed Italian people. There will be no tax collector in Ethiopia who will be draining off millions of lire from Addis Ababa to Rome. Instead, Italy will pay for years the heavy cost of the conquest.

On can hear Cicero and Pompey and the great Julius, now in their celestial abodes, asking in bewilderment if this Mussolini can be in his right mind. No loot! No revenues! No slaves! No booty for the legions! No gold or treasures for the generals! What sort of war is this? Some little professor, if he chances to be about, will be able to explain to the imperial specters that it is just a little divertissement to interrupt the operation of economic law which is working remorselessly in the harried peninsula, and that, as soon as the war is over, the dictator will confront again that same cruel law of money and credit which harassed the old consuls and their imperial successors and all the rulers from that day to this, including the fascist saviors of the world. JOHN T. FLYNN.

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Extra Added Attractions

BECAUSE Walt Disney has always had his eye on his business and no time for fooling around, the wind raised by those responsible for the dither about him as a Significant Subject has passed over in an interesting way. The air clears and he becomes what he was in the first place: common and everyday, not inaccessible, not in a foreign language, not suppressed or sponsored or anything. Just Disney, making another to go into all the big gaudy houses and little tank-town houses all over the country, under Extra Added Attractions. And so he can be seen at work again and it can be seen whether he is any good after all.

There was a time when the Disney outfit seemed to be stalled in the rather pretentious dead-end alley of "The Three Little Pigs," and practically everything it touched turned to lollypops for the kiddies. But now, certainly "The Band Concert" and "Who Killed Cock Robin?" are not only Disney at his absolute best, but represent two of the most nearly perfect film bits I have seen anywhere (the first of these is already out of immediate circulation, the other just getting into the second-run houses).

"The Band Concert" is a good reminder that whether these cartoons are overtly Silly Symphonies or not, the musical staff at work on them always seems to be well out in front of other musical staffs in the industry. I do not mean for the mere synchronization and recording of sound, but for making sound a natural and basic part of the production, for originating scores and putting them over with good orchestral swing and nice handling of the vocal work —trios, choruses or whatever. The music is light, but often fetching and always adequate, its function well understood.

But aside from reminders, "The Band Concert" was a really marvelous little bit of nonsense, with a fine, tempered edge and the consistent ability to carry the fancy on, not letting the old dog die. The situation was that of a few musicians from the animal kingdom playing a job in some open-air stand—led, as I remember, by the mouse gent, who was most terribly baffled by a sleeve that flopped down over his baton in the *sforzando* passages, and by the tendency of his band to leave off following the beat and join in with a wandering duck, who was getting "Turkey in the Straw" out of a tin fife at a signal strength of about forty, beating it out with his foot, and not to be quelled either. I don't recall all the details now, but the main number was the "William Tell" overture, which was assisted by the elements, there coming up a fierce twister of wind along in the more dramatic passages, the band getting carried up in the air completely, scattering individually through the air but still playing music like the devil and on the beat, and finally coming down one by one into the coda, which wound up in a glory of sound and wreckage.

The thing in main outline would be very little, if it weren't for the way every incident, every foot of film, is given a solid basis in observation, so that natural action is caught and fixed in a typical gesture, rendered laughable through exaggeration or through transference into the unfamiliar; and for the swift way all the incidents pile up on one another. No one ever saw a band so busy, proud and full of troubles as this, from the virtuoso swapping of hands in the flute duet to the hard-pressed air of the brass section; but the point is, no one ever saw a band that did not have all these things logically in solution, once he looks back on it. As one who has wasted the better part of a lifetime following the bass drum and wondering whether to be a great trombonist, with all that sweep of brass, or famous in the lower registers, to blow thunder into a tuba, I can say that in "The Band Concert" one of the final comments on the public playing of instruments everywhere has been commented.

"Who Killed Cock Robin?" sounds like one of these colored-candy things, but nothing of the kind. It is one of the most cynical of the Disneys, and even for those who attend comedy not to laugh, but sheerly to gaze down their noses at it for traces of Content, Social Meaning and the like, it may prove beneficial if not funny. It has a combination of take-off on Hollywood personalities and burlesque of the ways of justice (a rather pat ending, however).

The opening stretch shows Cock Robin, nominally a bird, but giving out a serenade that is surely in the accents of Mr. Bing Crosby, falling afoul of himself in his best manner by trying to do it sweet but also hot. The female lead is likewise feathered, but by virtue of certain astonishing developments in the upper regions, forward, and by a routine of sundry bumflips, you-impress-me's, etc., turns out a dead ringer for Miss Mae West, complete with voice and picture hat. Some vague sinister shape cannot stand all this from Bing and puts an arrow through him; and this brings on other business: the wagon coming up, the coppers jumping out, rounding up bystanders and clubbing them plenty, and eventually the trial for murder.

The courtroom (and main) sequence has an owl for judge, giving out the theme in a voice like the low pedal point on the Music Hall organ, and for prosecuting attorney a likely and damn suspicious parrot, with coattails and hands under them. Also a jury, which supplies a neatly pattered chorus where appropriate; the usual police, who are busy; and a suspected toughey with the phenomenal bass vocal chords of Poly McClintock out of Waring's band, telling the coppers "Lay off, lay off."

Burlesque slants on the courtroom are old material, but this one is surely one of the most completely ingenious that has been done—all by means of a few forms of wild life, the most painstaking original care for design and animation, and a practically inexhaustible genius for locating the familiar in the strange. Bright with both sound and motion, it works in the solemn institutions of the bar, the pen, etc., to the delight of all, with the judge doing double kicks, the prosecuting attorney trying to outface Joe Mayhem as defendant, and the McClintock voice coming over: "All right, so what. I rubbed him out, so what," with the police slugging everybody in sight and Mae West parading it right up to the jury, looking to avenge her man.

But there is no use talking along forever about anything so vivid and quickly over as this silly operetta. In twenty or thirty years, pokers in film archives will be pointing to pieces like "The Band Concert" and "Who Killed Cock Robin?" saying with authority that this was a fine thing for American pictures to be doing, and we will read all about it in the right places, if still around. For the present it may be just as well there is no need for these solemnities, the main thing being that there is something very good to see here.

OTIS FERGUSON.

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Kind Hearts Are More

HOWEVER much my ancestral beginnings on one side may have been Connecticut, moving along afterwards to New York State and then to Vermont, I have known well, out of all New England, only one single locality. In that part of the world I should not say that the countryside is exactly amenable. One might almost call it sour perhaps. At any rate I used to hear the more cultivated members admire certain other parts of the state for the reason that "the people would not do anything for you." It seemed an odd virtue not to do a service or so for a summer visitor; and even odder to admire the fact of that. But visitors, doubtless, have their evil sides also, and we will let it all go as human nature; not at the moment discussing the nature of civilization as such.

For a time I planned, and even made notes for, a set of pieces dealing with this region, to be called "Lemon Pastorals." There were plenty of incidents by which the intent should be indicated: for example, a young professor coming fresh from Michigan saw out of his window one afternoon a runaway, an old couple, the horse overturning the buggy, the woman, around seventy, thrown out. He got his motor car, and rushed her to the doctor a few blocks away—the hip was broken. At the doctor's the husband came back to the car; "How much do I owe you," he said, "people don't do this sort of thing for nothing." One such incident might speak a volume.

But I decided that such a series of writings would not be worth the trouble, that most people would not even believe the notes set down, and that over such sketches something forced, a miasma of genre, or of sophomoric realism, would settle down, the half truth, the bitter sterility.

Coming, therefore, to that farmhouse in a Connecticut valley, open and lovely, stone walls running in patterns, a single pointed cedar beside a pond, the hill climbing on up and ending in trees and a great barn—coming into this gentle and verdant world, I left my mind open. Perhaps these people might "not do anything for you," and perhaps they might. The green, the traversing walls, the high, beautiful sunset beyond the orchard trees were there, the quick summer rains, with that echo in one's mind of Leopardi's poem about the quiet after the storm:

Odo augelli far festa, e la gallina,
Tornata in su la via,
Che ripete il suo verso. Ecco il sereno
Rompe là da ponente, alla montagna;
Sgombrasi la compagna,
E chiaro nella la valle il fiume appare

telling how he hears the birds make a festival, and the hen, returned to her ways, who repeats her song. The open sky breaks, and clear in the valley the river appears.

Well—at this farmhouse the cooking arrangements are not yet ready and so we decide to go down to Mr. Ed Price's Roost, half a mile down the road and, leaving out sandwiches, cigarettes, gasoline and soda, all signified on the signboard, have a cup of coffee.

We are not very tidy, what with moving and digging, and the lady of the place thinks that perhaps we are new hired men on the farm where our house stands. That is straightened out, and the coffee is already half made. The screened porch is cool, we sit there and look out on the garden patch and on chicken coops of an immoderate ambition that plainly shows the importance of their holdings. The subject is therefore chickens, and it appears that the master of the place has been a chicken fancier for rich men, nurturing blooded fowls that took ribbons by the score and cups and prices from $500 upward, though not any more, in these bad times. So that thus before we know it we are deep in chickens and poultry shows, prizes, et cetera. Only the mother and a boy of eleven, warm and bright and intelligent, tell us of these things so far. We are suddenly in the house, seeing cups—there are fourteen, important not for their looks we are told—and then a clothing box full of ribbons, and then photographs, some of which cost $30 apiece, and papa's photograph is here too, the little boy says, showing me a book of newspaper clippings. Mr. Price himself comes in then, and we sit down on the porch with the coffee, ready by now, and talk about the war in France, where he was, and the chicken and dog business, ruined in these times, and Mrs. Price says we must have a piece of the lemon pie that she has just baked, and we say no, but after some repetitions we do have it, fat and delicious, with a perfect pastry bottom, at eleven o'clock in the morning, so that we feel stuffy and choked like a bad engine. Meantime the other son, a boy of thirteen, very handsome, has come in, and we all sit there talking (while the jobs at our farmhouse plainly languish) of noble, prize-taking chicken names.

It turns out that Mrs. Price is a Democrat, a great Democrat, and she believes in speaking her mind. So I say that I too am that, and in my family in the South you can bet your life I should never have the courage to admit that I was anything else, and we gather that all have heard of the solid South in politics. Mr. Price, it seems, having observed so much of the world, is not political at all. But Mrs. Price, being a fiery Democrat like that, leads me to say that in our family we had only one Republican and this was only because—it was explained to me as a child—he had been shot in the liver during the war and after all he was only my Uncle Henry-in-law, so you see.

Life has certainly changed for him, Mr. Price says, with the depression and people cutting down, and what can you get for a prize chicken these days? But no use whining, and they have made a garden, which is coming in, and they could never use half of what's in it, so we had better come down and help ourselves. Stricken with the two cups of coffee and the quarter of that large pie, I ask feebly, for the purposes of conversation mostly, whether then, he is a Communist. He says no, and am I one? I say that I have not had time yet to study the question out very thoroughly, though I have friends who are; but that some, at least, of these friends have confused me somewhat. They have not quit their jobs and joined the workers; they have retained their jobs and quit working.

A huge Persian cat has by now climbed into my lap to be stroked, and a collie, seeing that, lies down across my feet. She has lately had puppies, it seems, but all mixed up with a German police dog, and nobody wants any mongrels around, in case we care to take a puppy home.

"This boy," the mother says, pointing to the older of her sons, "he doesn't care so much about chickens."

"Oh, he likes them," the younger boy puts in.

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"You see, he's taking up for his brother, he doesn't want us to say he doesn't like chickens."

On a tour of the coops I say to their mother that these are about the nicest boys I ever saw, and she says that she never goes anywhere without them, though there are plenty of parties, and people say why does she tie herself down like that, and she always says to them, "I'll take a chance."

Since then the lady from whom we rent has sent in two vans of furniture out of storage, it seems; why not? The Italian contractor has sent half a kid for roasting, two gallons of wine, and offered a load of wood; a friend in the neighborhood has made curtains for the whole house, her housekeeper has sent in a piano, which had to be moved anyhow, and everyone has provided so many string beans that Pythagoras, who forbade them to his disciples, has become in my mind more of a living argument. Not even all that prepared us quite for our neighbor yesterday across the road. He is a small man almost eighty, his blue eyes very sharp and bright. Once he was in business downtown in New York, but he said to himself, Ed, why don't you get out of this and go out where the apple blossoms are, and so he did, which was twenty-seven years ago. It was just after dusk, after the cool had begun and the dew's freshness come into our garden, when we saw him there with his arms full of corn and a hoe in those slight hands. He has a system of transplanting corn, he said, the stalks have to be pulled out of the hills anyhow, and we must plant this. He gives directions while we dig, and meantime recites a bit of poetry. Music hath charms to soothe the savage; then, leaving out Congreve's "breast," the rhyme says something about cabbage. You must water this corn like this for a week, he says, and you'll see. STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Penological Conference in Germany

SIR: Strange news is to be found in the papers. On August 18, 1935, Berlin is to be the scene of a penological Congress on whose agenda, among many other questions of penal law and prison reform, is the following: Are the [humanistic] methods applied in the execution of penalties with a view to educating and reforming criminals calculated to bring about the effects aimed at and are these tendencies generally advisable? A debate on the humanization of prisons is to take place in the capital of the Third Reich, whose brutalities against prisoners are condemned by all decent human beings. In the land whose "leader" waded through a blood-bath on June 30, 1934, and caused hundreds to be murdered, many of them men who had paved the road to power for him; in Berlin, where as recently as July 15 of the present year, human beings, merely because they were Jews, were pogromized and bloodily beaten without receiving the least protection from the authorities in this city—the representatives of most of the nations in the world are to confer on prison reform.

No reproach is directed against the representatives of other nations for deciding to hold the Congress in Berlin. The decision was made in 1930 at the International Penal and Penitentiary Congress in Prague when no one counted upon a Nazi victory in Germany, and in response to an invitation of the then republican German government, which could boast of having made during the Weimar republic some remarkable achievements in the field of prison reform. Only three years ago Germany could have shown some model institutions. It is strange that the Nazi government, which otherwise puts so much emphasis on discontinuing the policy of the republican government, allowed the invitation to stand and indeed recognized it, and that the representatives of other nations ostensibly saw or could find no reason for withdrawing their acceptance of the German invitation. Only one prospective delegate, Dr. Shelden Glueck, professor at the Harvard Law School, is known to have declined an appointment to be an American delegate because the Congress is to be held in Germany.

With justice, Mr. Samuel Untermyer, in his protest against the participation of the United States in the Congress, has said: "German prisons become breeding places for sadistic torture and the Hitler regime has gone on record against the humanization of punishment." This is actually the case. Consequently one cannot conceive that fruitful conferences on prison reform can take place in the Nazi milieu.

The delegates to the Congress may be in a very difficult predicament in Berlin. The government of the United States has named twenty-two representatives to the Congress, with Sanford Bates, Federal Prison Commissioner, as chairman, and including the internationally famous warden of Sing Sing prison, Lewis E. Lawes. Among the delegates are six women, including one Jewess. The last-named especially will be in a difficult position. It will not be possible for her to fail to come into contact with Nazis, who not only see in the Jew a being of a lower order, but are also accustomed to express their scorn of Jews in word and deed. And the five other women delegates? Will the Nazis, who have excluded women from all public life, hold conferences with the American women delegates from which German women are barred? But also the other delegates, who are known as pioneers in the humanization of prison life, will encounter difficulties. Some will run the danger of shaking the hand of a Nazi who killed or maltreated a friend. Furthermore, speeches of welcome will be given in Berlin by representatives of the German government and among others by Dr. Frank, the Minister of Justice, especially infamous among all decent folk. He it is who has the death of the highly esteemed Jewish lawyer, Strauss, on his conscience. Frank had Strauss arrested because Strauss had earlier won a lawsuit against him. Strauss was then beaten, deprived of his shoes and led, to the mockery of the crowds, through the streets of Munich, bearing this sign around his neck: "I will never complain about the Nazis again." He was then murdered in the concentration camp at Dachau. Frank's responsibility for this murder is so clear that fifty Bavarian jurists sent him the notice of Dr. Strauss's death with the inscription: "Your Murder, Mr. Frank!" If the delegates to the Congress study the theory of the treatment of dangerous criminals, they will have an actual murderer at their deliberations.

Let us hope that the cry of the defenseless prisoners, mistreated in prisons and concentration camps, will be heard at the Congress, and it is to be desired that the delegates will feel the duty of concerning themselves with the plight of these hopeless victims of Nazism. We know that the Nazi leaders set great store by being regarded in England and America as honest. Then let them show the torture chambers of the political prisoners: Columbia House in Berlin; Tempelhof, so near the Congress hall; and the concentration camps. The experienced penologists will, if they are conscious of their responsibility, insist on being allowed to study the concentration camps. They ought especially to inspect the punishment cells and the cellars and, above all, talk to the prisoners privately. In spite of everything, however, it will be very difficult to learn the truth about conditions in the penal institutions. We know that the Nazis, just before a visit by foreigners, remove to other institutions prisoners on whose bodies traces of mistreatment are visible. A severely maltreated political prisoner told me after his release that he once was one of a group of those prisoners whom foreigners must not see, and that the transport of mistreated prisoners met, in a railroad station, the train in which were the foreigners who were going to visit the concentration camp. A Nazi contemptuously said to the prisoners: "See there, those are the foreigners who wanted to look at you! They will find only hale prisoners!"

Let us hope that the participants in the Congress will know how to circumvent such Nazi tricks and will not be satisfied with being shown Potemkin villages.

New York City. DR. KURT ROSENFELD.

[Dr. Rosenfeld was formerly Minister of Justice in Prussia, and is now in exile in the United States.—THE EDITORS.]

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For a National Labor Party

SIR: I was much interested in your editorial in The New Republic of July 24, "Is It the New Party?" and also in Mr. Lovett's article on the question. As an old member of the Independent Labor Party in England and as one who did a considerable amount of work to help build up the Labor Party there, I am naturally hopeful of seeing such a movement succeed here, in the country of my adoption.

It seems to me that those who desire such a party are creating their own obstacles. Why wait till all the big shots of the Farmer-Labor Party, the A.F. of L., a handful of politicians, and the intellectuals settle all their differences and get going ten years later? The very name they evolved at Chicago is a monstrosity. American Commonwealth Political Federation! Good lord! What a grandiloquent mouthful. . . . Why not call it the National Labor Party and have done with it? . . . Why not get a dozen people together who know what it's all about, lay down a set of principles and start at the street corner, send delegations to trade-union members' meetings and preach the idea? This was done in England years before the idea materialized. . . .

It's no good trying to start a full-fledged party with a fanfare of trumpets and with Huey Long's and Father Coughlin's tactics. Such a party must have a beginning and a growth, and the time to start is now. The people are ripe for it. I know because I talk to them about it whenever I get a chance. I am spending my nights visiting people, trying to rebuild a union in this city. Here, right now, the people are in the humor. The worker is the man who needs the party, isn't he? And the party needs the name that will speak right to his heart. A name with a punch in it.

Go down to the people, start with the rank and file of trade-union members. Don't place too much reliance in those who have made a name and have political prestige to uphold and I believe there could be a flourishing labor party in this country in a couple of years. I am getting old but I should like to have a hand in it.

J. T. LUCOCK,
General Organizer,
Philadelphia, Pa. Pocketbook Workers' Union.

The U.M.W. and the T. V.A.

SIR: It is my conviction that Sterling D. Spero is quite wrong about the United Mine Workers of America when he says, "They also join with the Tennessee Valley Authority operators in fighting the T.V.A" [The New Republic, July 3].

In Nashville, Tennessee, in January, the American Federation of Labor called a regional conference of labor representatives from the fifteen states in the Southeast. It happens that I drafted most of the resolutions adopted by the conference, including a very emphatic endorsement of the T.V.A. The delegates from the United Mine Workers were the most important bloc in the conference and voted for the motion supporting the T.V.A.

I am informed by fellow laborites that at the State Federation of Labor conventions in Tennessee and Alabama during June, the district officers of the United Mine Workers denounced efforts of the power-trust crowd to link their union with anti-T.V.A. propaganda. Big headlines appeared in the dailies predicting that the miners would denounce the T.V.A. William Mitch, United Mine Workers' president in Alabama, placed his district solidly behind the T.V.A. William Tamblazer, Tennessee district president, did the same at the convention in that state, and both men admitted that cheap power would eventually displace coal miners. "We are too intelligent to attempt to halt progress," Tamblazer said.

JOHN W. EDELMAN, Research Director,
Philadelphia, Pa. American Federation of Hosiery Workers.

SIR: I am glad to learn from Mr. Edelman that local and district representatives of the United Mine Workers are supporting the T.V.A. It is nevertheless true, as I pointed out in my article, that the United Mine Workers of America, through its national officers, has joined with the coal operators in organizing the National Job Saving and Investment Protection Bureau and that this Bureau has been steadily fighting the government's hydro-electric program in general and the T.V.A. in particular.

New York City. STERLING D. SPERO.

Salaries, Wages and Dividends

SIR: Your article, "Some Salaries and Wages," of July 10 is not complete. Inasmuch as salaries are reported for the entire year, wages, of course, should be figured for the whole year to show any lay-offs, etc. For instance, the wage average for the American Telephone and Telegraph Company is between $26 and $27 per week. Does this mean that traditionally poorly paid "hello girls," who are rapidly replaced by automatic contraptions, make far in excess of $1,000 per year? I doubt it, and fear that the reported average includes some of the fat salaries of the officials. An article of this kind should not stop at salaries and wages, but also include the dividends paid in each case.

St. Paul, Minn. WILLIAM HILL.

Let Roosevelt Lead the Left

SIR: Evidently the chief obstacle to the formation of a new party by 1936 is the unwillingness of men like Nye, Marcantonio, Olson, the La Follettes, to take the political risk of opposing Roosevelt. These men feel that while the masses have lost faith in the old parties, the President is still popular and will receive the votes of liberals and radicals who do not want him replaced by a conservative. There is one way to handle this obstacle. A third party can be formed that will nominate Roosevelt for President and its own men for all other offices. Then the progressive leaders would not have to worry about the people resenting their spoiling Roosevelt's chances of reëlection by the formation of a new party.

New York City. THEODORE WILLIAMS.

Extracts from Letters

CHARLES H. PROUTY of Tracy, Minnesota, sends in a suggestion for the political strategy of left-wing sympathizers in the 1936 elections. As a matter of practical politics, all the left-liberal leaders must be brought into one coalition in order to bring their followers with them—but the leaders must be shown that their political futures will not be endangered. Mr. Prouty feels it would be quixotic and futile to launch a new party in 1936, and he advises the left leaders to meet and come to an understanding among themselves, and then run on the tickets of established parties.

Jacob Drachler, of 2917 Avenue N, Brooklyn, New York, writes to say that he is compiling a series of pamphlet anthologies of radical verse to be issued by the Student League for Industrial Democracy. He will be grateful for suggestions of particular poems, authors, books and magazines. The first pamphlet is to consist of war poems, but he will welcome leads on all types of radical poetry.

William Floyd, director of Peace Patriots, writes to tell of that organization's new program which includes registering with the County Clerk of New York, for a fee of twenty-five cents, the names of American-born citizens who wish to express their opposition as conscientious objectors to all wars.

We have received a copy of resolutions adopted by the New York local of the Postal Workers of America pointing out that "the efforts to remedy the shortage in the New York Post Office by employing part-timers (believed to be recommended by political bodies) is ineffective and tends to undermine the Civil Service by resuscitating the abominable features of the spoils system that prevailed before the establishment of a Civil Service," and leading to the statement that they "protest the unjustifiable delay in filling vacancies, disapprove the policy of taking into the Service 'casual' labor and condemn the practice of demoralizing the Civil Service by exposing the Post Office personnel to the corrupting influence of political bosses."

Notice of victory is sent in by members of the Workers' Council of Beth Moses Hospital, Brooklyn, in the struggle for reinstatement of 100 employees discharged on May 18. All of the discharged workers are to be restored to their jobs, and the hospital grants recognition of two organizations to represent maintenance workers, nurses and technicians.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Reconstruction and the Negro

THE AUTHOR of this book[1] has been for more than a quarter of a century the militant theorist of the Negro's struggle for equal rights. To him the Negro intellectual of this generation, whether conscious or unconscious of the debt, owes more than to any other man of his race.

During recent years the preëminence of Dr. Du Bois' leadership has been on the wane. One of the causes of this was the growing realization among a number of Dr. Du Bois' younger disciples that his program of civil liberty and Negro suffrage rights did not touch the basic realities of Negro life. Some of them saw the race problem as part and parcel of the proletarian class struggle and felt that its solution lay in the alignment of white and black workers. Indeed, Dr. Du Bois himself began to shift his ground a little before the depression. Breaking with the movement for democratic equalitarianism, he now advocates the organization of the black masses in producers' and consumers' coöperatives within the confines of segregation. He admits that this plan, if executed, will establish a segregated black economy. He contends, however, that this must be accepted, for it is the only way Negro workingmen can survive unemployment and poverty until the white workers are sufficiently class-conscious to include them in their industrial organizations and political struggles. In other words, Dr. Du Bois concedes the inevitability of socialism and even the desirability of it, but is at the same time distrustful of white workers. He cannot believe that a movement founded upon working-class solidarity and cutting across racial lines can afford any immediate relief to the Negro's economic plight or have any practical realization in the near future. By temperament and habituation to the Negro equal-rights struggle he is wholly unfitted to join, to say nothing of initiating, such a movement. He is a racialist whose discovery of Marxism as a critical instrument has been too recent and sudden for it to discipline his mental processes or basically to change his social philosophy.

It is in terms of the contradictions and the ideological confusion that have of necessity accompanied Dr. Du Bois' changed position (which comes very near to racial chauvinism) that his present work must be viewed if it is to be properly appraised. On the one hand, he aims to rewrite the history of the Civil War and Reconstruction periods to show the importance of the Negro in winning the war and in assisting the radical Republicans to institute "pure democracy" in this country. On the other hand, he seeks to reinterpret the events of the period on a Marxian basis.

According to Dr. Du Bois, the Civil War was won by a "general strike" of over two hundred thousand slave laborers. He tells us that these slaves, rather than avenge two hundred and fifty years of unpaid labor through the use of physical force, merely quit the plantations while their masters were at the front and flocked *en masse* to the Northern army. At first the Union officers and, more especially, the soldiers were hostile to these incoming hordes of blacks, while the federal government was reluctant to utilize them against the white Secessionists. But the failure of the draft and the continued military reverses soon changed this attitude and the "striking" slaves were put to work as soldiers and laborers. Without this man-power the North, Du Bois says, would never have won the Civil War.

When the war was over a violent debate arose as to the political and social status of the emancipated slaves in American society. Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner, the exponents of "abolition democracy," demanded full citizenship for the Negroes. As the execution of their program required the use of the financial and military power of the federal government, Northern capitalists at first opposed it. But when they realized that the planter aristocracy was bent upon recapturing the old political power with which it had defeated Northern industrial and commercial objectives up to the war, they were glad to accept Stevens' and Sumner's measures as a means of destroying the old enemy. This coalition not only resulted in giving the ballot and civil liberties to Negroes but in throwing the control of Southern politics into the hands of propertyless black voters. On the basis of the Negro's new political power, Northern capital succeeded in having all the policies that had been opposed by the ante-bellum South written into the scheme of the national system by 1877.

Having thus established its economic and political hegemony, capitalism no longer needed the Negro voters and politicians. It left them to the mercy of the South's rising banking and merchant class. The state governments controlled by Negro politicians were permitted to collapse; and wholesale disfranchisement destroyed every remnant of Negro political authority in the new South. Thus was ended a great revolutionary experiment. Du Bois says:

> . . . . There was being put into force one of the most extraordinary experiments of Marxism. . . . That is, backed by the military power of the United States, a dictatorship of labor was being attempted and those who were leading the Negro race in this vast experiment were emphasizing the necessity of the political power and organization backed by the protective military power.

This entire analysis of the forces behind the Civil War and the Reconstruction is written brilliantly. But for all the persuasive eloquence and literary power of Dr. Du Bois, it is impossible for him to convert the wholesale flight of Negroes from the plantations into a general strike against the slave regime. In the literature of social thought, the general strike has come to mean the organized stoppage of work by labor on a national scale either to force immediate economic or political concessions from employers or the government, or to capture the state itself and socialize industry. Whether used in a conservative or a revolutionary manner, the general strike implies a real consciousness not only of the class issues that make its use necessary but also of the ends deliberately sought by those who use it. The Negro slaves' so-called general strike grew out of no such consciousness of the issues or of the significance that their "escape to freedom" would have upon the ends of the war. As a matter of fact, their flight in many instances resulted from the destruction of plantation life by the Northern army. That the Negro soldiers and laborers played a really important role in the Civil War no unbiased historian would deny, but that they *won* the war by a general strike, or by any other means, cannot be established scientifically.

If, as Dr. Du Bois claims, the Negro's political power and organization represented an experiment in Marxism,

[1] Black Reconstruction, by W. E. Burghardt Du Bois. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 746 pages. $4.50.

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the socialistic character of the experiment was wholly unappreciated by Marx himself. Dr. Du Bois' "dictatorship of black labor" rested upon the military power of the government, and was therefore compelled to serve the interests of Northern capital, which controlled the government. Had Negro control of the Southern states during the Reconstruction been of a different character, it would never have been supported by Stevens and Sumner, who were members of the capitalist class. There was no fundamental conflict between them and the other less radical representatives of Northern finance and industry, as Dr. Du Bois thinks. The Civil War completed our bourgeois revolution and, like all such revolutions, produced its Jacobins and its Girondists, its lefts and its rights. Sumner and Stevens were simply Jacobins, the radical exponents of the liberal democratic traditions that had triumphed with the economic success of the revolution. They knew that equal citizenship was meaningless without property, the basis of the democratic rights of man. Thus, in addition to their advocacy of Negro political equality and suffrage rights, they sought to make Negroes small landowners. But neither Sumner nor Stevens would sanction confiscation of land in order to assure the Negro his "forty acres and a mule."

Moreover, the fact that the dominant ideal of Negro life was that of the American Common Man makes Dr. Du Bois' interpretation all the more fantastic. This ideal, which Abraham Lincoln expressed as the right of every man to "look forward and hope to be a hired laborer this year and the next, work for himself afterwards, and finally hire men to work for him," was simply reëchoed in Negro life by such leaders as Frederick Douglass and Martin Delaney. Belief in their ability to realize this essentially middle-class ambition prevented any "Marxian experiment" among the Negroes or, for that matter, among the white workingmen of that day. And the persistence of the Negro's belief in the possibility of economic and social advancement by means of business enterprise and the accumulation of property by individual members of the race, not to mention his abiding faith in the good will of the wealthy white man, has until this day confined his radicalism mainly to militant civil libertarianism.

ABRAM L. HARRIS.

The Law of Nations

The Soviet Union and International Law, by T. A. Taracouzio. New York: The Macmillan Company. 546 pages. $7.50.

THIS IS an utterly unrealistic book on a fantastic subject—Communist international law as it may be deduced from Soviet international practice. Mr. Taracouzio's conception of international law appears in the opening sentences of his book (the italics here as elsewhere are my own):

> It is a commonplace that the World War provided an exacting test of the precepts of international law *governing* war and neutrality. Many of the traditional rules had been found *inadequate* to changed conditions. *The law had been outstripped by the growth of the civilization it no longer reflected.*

With such a beginning, one has a right to expect the worst; and one will not be disappointed. Assuming a reign of law by which other nations are governed in their international relations, the Soviets are charged by Mr. Taracouzio with opportunism and with permitting *interest* instead of *principle* to shape their international policy. Apparently, he has forgotten Thucydides' account of what happened to the "precepts of international law" in the first world war, and how the Athenian Assembly reacted to the respective claims of "interest" and "principle" urged upon them by the Corcyraean and Corinthian envoys respectively. He has also apparently forgotten the famous legal maxim: *inter arma silent leges*—the law is silent when the cannons roar. He does recall Clausewitz' famous statement that "war is nothing but a continuation of the political relationship by the use of different means." But he considers Clausewitz' conception of war "unique." To Mr. Taracouzio war and peace are not factual situations but juridical constructions—each regulated by a separate set of "laws." For has not Grotius written a celebrated treatise entitled "De Jure Belli ac Pacis"?

Mr. Taracouzio, therefore, rejects the Clausewitz-Lenin conception of international relations as an explanation of what is actually going on in the capitalist world. He is particularly incensed at Lenin for an alleged "modification" of the Clausewitz "definition":

> The acceptance of the Clausewitz definition of war by the Communists was sanctioned by Lenin when he said that "war is a continuation of the same policies by using other (namely, *forcible*) means." . . . The modification of the definition by the insertion of the expression "forcible" is very significant for the Communists. It suggests the conception of compulsion as opposed to freedom.

Apparently non-Communist nations make war without the use of force, and Clausewitz was not thinking of force at all.

But the Communists aren't always so bad. Sometimes they are quite ready to fall in with what Mr. Taracouzio calls the *classical* "conception," "definition" and "laws" of war. For instance: "The Soviets *do recognize* that the existence of war entails lack of diplomatic relations between the belligerent states." And in order to confound all doubting Thomases, he immediately furnishes the proof supporting his assertion. "Evidence of this is found in the fact that although the independence of Finland, Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania had been recognized by the Soviets as early as 1918, so that there would have been no reason for delay in establishing normal diplomatic relations had these states not been at war with the Soviets, it was not until peace had been concluded that diplomatic relations with the R.S.F.S.R. were in fact established." Thus are the principles of "classical" international law vindicated by the homage paid to them in practice by the followers of Karl Marx.

I have no space to discuss our author's speculations on the subject of the class struggle and the Communist theories of the state, but I must call attention to one of his startling historical discoveries. On page 111, he refers casually to "the wars which Poland and the Baltic Republics fought with the R.S.F.S.R. *for their independence.*" On page 315 he devotes a paragraph to these wars, which, he says, had their genesis *"in the urge to self-determination which culminated in the separation of those countries from the parent state,* Russia, or to be exact, from the R.S.F.S.R." This will be news to most historians, who are under the impression that neither Poland nor the other countries named were ever part of the R.S.F.S.R.; that the R.S.F.S.R. had from the very beginning favored the self-determination of nations, and had therefore freely recognized the independence of these countries; and that the wars referred to took place *after* their independence had been recognized.

LOUIS B. BOUDIN.

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An Old World War

Marlborough: His Life and Times, Vols. III and IV, by Winston S. Churchill. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 364 and 296 pages. $6.

IN THESE two volumes Mr. Churchill continues the Marlborough story through the years 1702-5—the first four years of the War of the Spanish Succession, a world war against Louis XIV. Necessarily much of the narrative is military history, on which Mr. Churchill is an authority. In a previous volume he gave an illuminating description of the game of war as practised by the masters of that day, in which the successful defense or the capture of one or another of the various fortresses counted so many points in the score, according to the strength of each.

It was Marlborough's distinction among these experts that he perceived the true objective of war to be that of destroying the hostile army. As commander of the combined English and Dutch forces, however, he was obliged to submit to the constitutional limitations imposed by Holland on its generals, who were forbidden to fight a battle without the consent of deputies representing the seven provinces. Again and again Marlborough sought to educate these gentlemen by showing them beforehand plans of attacking the enemy on favorable terms, and afterwards explaining what opportunities of victory had been missed. It was in vain. The Dutch preferred to advance and strengthen their frontier by taking a fortress here and there. In three years out of four, as Mr. Churchill puts it, "He had not been allowed to make war, but only to play military chess. Undoubtedly he had won the game." So humiliated was he at one time by this timid policy that he wrote to the French marshals that his failure to fight them was not his fault.

Once only in these years was Marlborough's genius set free. When the Elector of Bavaria joined the French a wedge was driven into the Empire, and the House of Hapsburg was threatened with ruin. Then Marlborough carried his army up the Rhine and down the Danube, joined Prince Eugene and, far from his Dutch mentors, brought the Bavarians and their French allies to battle at Blenheim and won the most resounding action since the days of Gustavus Adolphus. So contrary to all rules was the whole proceeding that critics even in England, amid national rejoicing unequaled since the defeat of the Spanish Armada, could not quite persuade themselves that it was not sheer luck. Mr. Churchill, however, marshals the facts to show that the result was due to Marlborough's extraordinary power of controlling every detail, of providing for every contingency. His accounts of this and other military operations are marvels of clear exposition; every amateur of military history will find the book fascinating.

Marlborough was more than commander in the field. He was the directing head of the Grand Alliance, responsible not only for the safety of England and the defense of Holland, but for holding the Emperor to his engagements, for directing the Archduke Charles in an invasion of Spain to gain the crown (which was the nominal cause of the war), and for aiding the Duke of Savoy to make headway against the French in Italy. He was also leader of the political combination in Parliament which supported the war, and which required adroit shifting of ministers between Tories and Whigs. As the former were outmaneuvered they became more bitter. Amid detraction in England, jealousy of the Dutch generals, exasperating delay and indecision of the deputies in Holland, and incompetence and treachery in the Empire, Marlborough kept the calm front of gracious aplomb that was always so marked on the battlefield. Only his letters to his wife reveal his discouragement verging on despair. We can agree with Mr. Churchill that never did a commander win such high success against such varied odds of circumstance—though it is hardly necessary for him to restate the theme so often.

Mr. Churchill sees interesting parallels between the world war of 1702 and that of 1914. In both cases two powers, one strong and dominating, the other weak and decaying, held their interior lines against a confederacy surrounding them, and in both cases made an alliance that broke the ring—in one case with Bavaria, in the other with Turkey. We may expect him to develop this parallelism in his subsequent volumes. Certain differences he marks with an irony which, though not light and easy, is grateful:

> Although the great causes of dispute were stated with a robust vigor and precision which we have now lost, no hatred, apart from military antagonism, was countenanced among the troops. All was governed by the strict rules of war, into which bad temper was not often permitted to enter. The main acceptances of polite civilization still reigned across the lives of opposing armies, and mob violence and mechanical propaganda had not yet been admitted to the adjustment of international disputes.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Roto Section

Four Roads to Death, by Benjamin Appel. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

THOSE of us who had read Benjamin Appel's short stories were surprised by the subject matter of "Brain Guy," his first novel. The story of a small-shot gangster seemed more like material for Dashiell Hammett than for Appel; but it became clear very soon that Appel was attempting something different, something more than the manufacture of another piece of thrill machinery. He was trying to approximate the deadly, piddling reality that doesn't make the newspaper page, the real story of a gangster who would never be Public Enemy any number, who at his greatest peak wouldn't get more than two or three sticks of print. And, in spite of the overelegant writing, "Brain Guy" had actuality in it; it revealed, like a case history, the miserable realities behind the movie gangster.

In "Four Roads to Death" Appel appears to be attempting to do the same thing for the adventure formula—the tale the pulp magazines have worn to monotony—that he did for the gangster story. He tries to galvanize into reality an expedition, after gold, to the ruins of a city in an Asiatic desert; he tries to bring out of the old formula its hidden meanings and its actual drama. The attempt would be successful, for some of the writing has real tang, if the characters were any more than names on the pages. Perhaps the formula itself gets him down: his analysis of situations never achieves any depth, the conflicts are flat, conventionalized—as if he forgot what he must have set out to do. The sub-newspaper people who made "Brain Guy" alive are missing; the four people of this novel are, instead, out of the rotogravure section and there is nothing but more pictures on the other side of them. "Four Roads to Death" was a good idea, but is not a good novel. Yet spots in the story are so vivid it's a shame the book can't be called a brilliantly successful *tour de force.*

KENNETH WHITE.

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Marianne Moore

Selected Poems, by Marianne Moore. With an Introduction by T. S. Eliot. New York: The Macmillan Company. 142 pages. $2.

MISS Moore's "Observations" of 1924 were rightly named. Among modern poets she is exceptional for a detachment that lifts personal enthusiasm above private uses. Here she observes again, but her eye shows neither the innocence nor the wile of showmanship that obstructs the vision of her contemporaries. It is a vision as complex as it is candid, and as easily mistaken. She would not have survived the decade of post-war innovations if her stylistic novelty rested on nothing but the strained intellection, the forced sophistication, for which it is commonly dismissed. She is a complicated poet, but one suspects that her finished poem is far simpler than the experience from which it sprang. The process that complicates it is not one of artificial refraction. It is Miss Moore's way of piercing—with the aid of humor, obliquity and an instinctive compassion—through the pretense, erudition and false emotion that encrust the essential meaning in the life around her.

She may be writing about marriage and poetry with the evasive casuistry of "culture"; or about art and statecraft in the polysyllabic rhetoric of Senators and undergraduates; or about animals—fish, swan, pelican, jerboa, buffalo, mongoose—with the passionless accuracy of a treatise or textbook. Her style combines the frigid objectivity of the laboratory with the zeal of naïve discovery; it mixes the statistics of newspapers with the casual hints and literary cross-references of a mind constructed like a card catalogue. Her footnotes are themselves a masterpiece of historical penetration; they draw on the "Decameron" and Baxter's "Saints' Everlasting Rest," on The Literary Digest and Robert of Sorbonne, on "Animals of New Zealand" and Miss Carey Thomas' Founder's Address at Mt. Holyoke College in 1921. This is not a perversity of erudition, nor of ironic parody. It is a picture of the problem of the modern intelligence. Irony and curiosity are means towards Miss Moore's intense discriminations, but her purpose is essentially plain and carries the pathos of a passionate sincerity. When asked, in a recent questionnaire, what distinguishes her, she answered: "Nothing; unless it is an exaggerated tendency to visualize; and on encountering manifestations of life—insects, lower animals of human beings—to wonder if they are happy, and what will become of them."

But her problem is not simple, and grants her neither the charm nor the success of conventional poetry. This is no book of neat lyric masterpieces. Miss Moore is not satisfied to search out the law or purpose beneath the swarming phenomena around her; she feels it in the words she uses. Her language reveals, beneath its calculated technicalities and pastiche, the shock of concealed rhymes and harmonies. Her sentences, whether colloquial or rhetorical, move with a rhythm nerved by humor and "elegance." Her care for meaning makes her break a phrase, or even a word, to bring to the surface a suppressed quality—an embedded assonance, cadence or tone of thought. Hers is a poetry of superimposed meanings, and her object is to lift the layers of convention, habit, prejudice and jargon that mask the essential and irreducible truth.

She is neither facile nor insincere enough to pretend that these impediments do not exist. In facing them she has not only defined, with the minuteness of an exorbitant sensitiveness, the ordeal of the contemporary conscience; she has energized, by the agility of her imagination, the language in which she works. She remains, as Mr. Eliot claims, one of the few recent authors who "have been engaged in maintaining the life of the English language." In this she has one notable predecessor in America. The differences that lie between her work and the impulsive clairvoyance of Emily Dickinson's are great, but it is hard to name a closer rival to "The Single Hound" than some of those poems—"A Fish," "A Grave," "Marriage," "Sea Unicorns," "England," "Nine Nectarines"—in which Miss Moore's particular genius is best displayed.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL.

The Weavers of Paraguay

Land of Women, by Katharina von Dombrowsky. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

AT HIS *tertulia* in the Café Regina in Madrid, the Spanish novelist Valle Inclán used to comb his long white beard and tell me many tales about his travels in Paraguay. The two things that had impressed him above everything else in that country were the great white knotted cobwebs, glistening with silver dew, which spread in six-foot wheels across the jungle paths, like fantastic white butterflies; and the women, the remarkable women, who wove heaps of delicate white lace and white hammocks, all patterned like the webs of the forest.

From humble barefoot Guarani women in their woven *tápalos* to the proud Castillian beauty, all were a queer mixture of frowsy beauty and vital languor, always ready to perform monstrous duties of self-sacrifice, loyalty and courage—from living intimately with a leper husband to grabbing up the fallen rifle on the field of battle.

In the sixties, the terrible tyrant genius, Francisco López, abetted by his greedy Parisian mistress, Eliza Lynch (and with all these things Mme. Dombrowsky's novel deals), precipitated war against Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina, which wiped out most of the male population and created an unofficial polygamy, where three or four women readily worked for one man lolling in a hammock. The women, though enslaved, were still more vibrant and dominant there than their masters, in something of the same spirit that prevails on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico; and many laws reflect the survival of an ancient matriarchate. But the pampered male ego rises up in surges of bloody cruelty, to a system of class rule and political tyranny. The full explanation, of course, grows wider and deeper.

The Latin American strong man, with his odd inconsistencies of savagery and civilization, brutality and subtlety, has fascinated many writers, native and foreign. His characteristics provide the central theme of La Farge's simpler, admirable novel, "Sparks Fly Upward," of Valle Inclán's "Tirano Bandera," of Guzmán's "La Sombra del Caudillo." But Mme. Dombrowsky draws López—his Napoleonic urge, his unbridled power, his mistresses and excesses—against the whole social setting, from Indian to Creole and foreigner, from hovel to palace; and majestically she peoples that strange tropical world with warm sweet souls and terrible distortions of the human spirit. Everything is as tangled and parasitical as the jungle lying just behind it.

Mme. Dombrowsky's canvas is as broad as that of "War and Peace." Despite some technical deficiencies in the novel, all the vague shimmering beauty of a land where lotus buds burst into blossom in a few hours is thrown on

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a dark curtain of lust, social injustice, clerical corruption and war terror. Besides being an epic and commanding tale, it provides an excellent background for comprehending the recent horrors of war in the Chaco. Arnaldo Valdovino's "Cruces de Quebracho," a short stark record of present campaigning, reveals that the old deathless cruelties and braveries, the same class distinctions, the same race conflicts, the same bland clerical acceptance of evil, the heartless oppressions, are once more whirling the nation to the same red doom and disaster—whatever the outcome of the war—except that now international imperialism is tangled in the web and the weapons are more deadly.

But the black spiders still spin their lovely glistening webs through the forests, and afterwards the women of Paraguay will rebuild the shattered nation, patiently like the black spiders, but perhaps this time to better effect.

CARLETON BEALS.

Short Biographies

Men of Turmoil: Biographies by Leading Authorities of the Dominating Personalities of Our Day. New York: Minton, Balch and Company. 376 pages. $3.75.

Modern Short Biographies: Selected Masterpieces of Modern Biography. Edited by Marston Balch. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 395 pages. $2.

THESE collections of short biographies represent respectively what DeQuincey described as the literature of knowledge and the literature of power. The purpose of the first is information. It is a glorified Who's Who, predominantly political, of thirty-seven "highly dramatic and significant lives . . . the makers of today's headlines and tomorrow's history," all written by authorities. These birds of every feather include Franklin D. Roosevelt, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler, Gandhi, Trotsky, Lloyd George, Ramsay MacDonald, De Valera, Venizelos, Mustapha Kemal, Freud, Shaw, Havelock Ellis, Bergson, Einstein, Marconi. The arts are represented by Picasso, Epstein, Sibelius; the interpretative arts by Toscanini, Chaliapin and Paderewski.

This is a useful reference book. The biographies vary in value, some being merely factual and laudatory, others making at least an attempt at a critical attitude, some achieving it. Ernest Lindley, Ralph Fox, Harold Laski, Wingfield-Stratford, Mary Agnes Hamilton, William Plomer are among the biographers.

From this highly compressed contemporary tumult one turns with a sense of repose to the short masterpieces collected by Professor Balch, who contributes, in an introduction of thirty pages, an extremely readable, comprehensive and sound survey of biography—and especially of short biography—from Plutarch to the present day. Here is a rich selection, including Whibley's "Young Weston," Strachey's "Florence Nightingale" and "Boswell," Ludwig's "Leonardo," Maurois' "Young Werther," Lockhart's "Talleyrand," Virginia Woolf's "Miss Ormerod" and Isabel Burchart's "Margaret Baxter." American contemporaries are well represented by R. F. Dibble's "Aunt Mary Emerson," Gilbert Seldes' "Hammerstein the Magnificent," Robert M. Coates's "Blind . . . Deaf . . . Dumb." Reading lists of biographies long and short close the volume. There are few books on the art of biography and fewer good ones. This one excellently fulfills its intention. The short story has long had its devotees; and now the short biography may be about to acquire them.

CLARA G. STILLMAN.

Books in Brief

Cicero: The Fall of a Republic, by G. C. Richards. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 308 pages. $3.

THE MERIT of Mr. Richards' study lies in the fact that it presents a sober and diligent collation of material from primary sources, principally Cicero's letters. The claim of the publishers that this is "a distinctly modern though not sensational life of the great orator" is partly justified; there is nothing here that would startle a convention of Latin professors. But the claim to modernity rests on slender evidence—a sentence in favor of the League of Nations, allusion to articles in recent numbers of the classical periodicals, and critical exposure of the errors of Mommsen and Froude, etc. There is no reason to believe that the author has been affected by contact with such latter-day heretics as Ferrero, Rostovtsev, Tenney Frank or Warde Fowler. His method puts overemphasis on political and personal aspects of the republic's downfall, and ignores the economic argument, without which his opinions seem at times rather unrealistic. His style is at best honest if pedestrian; at worst, rhetorically ingenuous. He has a tendency in his chapters to fly off at a tangent sometimes, as if it were difficult for him to resist the fascinating flight of ideas; and his sentence structure is not always stamped with Ciceronian precision. Once in a while he perpetrates a genuine howler: "In a very immoral age he [Pompey] was a model of domestic behavior. He had five wives in succession, and to the last two of them we know that he was devotedly attached."

R. H.

Challenge to Democracy, by C. Delisle Burns. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 250 pages. $2.50.

Mr. Burns is a Socialist of the moderate, gradualist school. He believes in the collaboration of classes—if indeed there are classes—and in a state which is above classes. Thus, when he proposes a national Commission for Credit and Investment, he asks: "Who shall have public power for this purpose?" And he answers: "Not any existing class or interest, not the proletariat, whatever that may be, nor the capitalist, if there is any such class," but the state, which presumably dwells in the clouds, like the Hegelian "Idea." And because Mr. Burns does not believe in the existence of classes, he believes that we are all "consumers in the same sense" and that therefore the producer's interest should be subordinated to the consumer's. "Tyrannies have been destroyed and slaves freed by the only true reasoning, which is passionate"; nevertheless in times of economic depression, when people become excitable, "a social neurosis exists," as in Russia in 1917, in Italy in 1922, in Germany in 1923 and in 1932. Et cetera, et cetera.

H. S.

America Fights the Depression. Edited by Henry G. Alsberg. New York: Coward-McCann. 160 pages. $2.50.

The present volume, made up of documentary photographs from the files of the federal Civil Works Administration, is a sort of publicity scrapbook, not much more. We see that federal money initiated projects and employed some four million workers, and we know—though the book does not say so—that it then let them down again. We are interested in the vastness of the work undertaken; we perceive that materials and men in combination produce results—highways, installation of sodium lights, roads, restoration of antique sidewalks, new hospitals, models of

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Mayan tombs, fire breaks, flood-control projects, municipal shoe shops. We see in pictures more vividly than we possibly could in a book of words what went on last year; but for all that, the book is not within a mile of the revelation it should be. Nowhere does it actually communicate what for lack of a better word we may call the truth. Was all this a deft combination of bread with circuses? No details are given. We see a skyscraper and a little white schoolhouse in Mississippi. The caption reads: "Building the Cathedral of Learning at Pittsburgh, and rehabilitating a country school, Tunica County, Mississippi." We want to know how much money was spent on how many men for how long, and who owns the property now. E. E.

Playthings of Time, by Arnold Zweig. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

In this volume of short stories, Zweig puts one in mind of a marksman whose nerves are steady and whose gun is well loaded, but who nearly always fails to hit the bull's-eye. The explanation suggests itself: Herr Zweig's chief complaint is faultiness of vision. Writing of social themes (such as war and the general predicament of Nazi Germany), he does not find it necessary to view them from a specific social angle or from any positive convictions of his own—with the result that most of the stories he aims at them are loose and uneven in structure and all but pointless in idea. "A Spot on the Eyeball," the only story in the book to concern itself with a purely personal situation, is the only one that deserves to be praised: it is excellently done. To this simple tale of a tradesman who suffers an injury to his left eye and who is thereafter enthralled by the strange world his semi-blindness creates for him, Zweig brings all the irony, grace and pity that is missing from his more ambitious performances. H. N.

Contributors

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ANNA LOUISE STRONG is the author of many books about Russia and the Orient: "China's Millions," "The Road to the Gray Pamirs," "Russia Conquers Wheat." Her autobiography, "I Change Worlds," was reviewed in The New Republic for May 1.

IGNAZIO SILONE is an Italian novelist and short-story writer now living in Switzerland. He is the author of "Fontamara," published last year by Smith and Haas, and of a book of short stories soon to be published by McBride.

ABRAM L. HARRIS received a Guggenheim Fellowship for 1935 to complete a study of Karl Marx and Thorstein Veblen. His book "Black Capitalism" is now in press.

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CARLETON BEALS is a specialist in Latin American affairs. His more recent books include "The Crime of Cuba" and "Fire on the Andes."

CLARA G. STILLMAN, sister of Ernest and Martha Gruening, is a frequent contributor of reviews and critical articles to various magazines.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Rolfe Humphries, Herman Simpson, Ernestine Evans and Helen Neville.

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